GT
85
.F7

FLS
2015
091508

MAN and his CUSTOMS

By MARGARET FRY

Class GT85
Book .F7
Copyright No.

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT.

MAN and HIS CUSTOMS

UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME

HOW THE WORLD GREW UP
The Story of Anthropology

RACES OF MEN
The Story of Ethnology

HOW THE WORLD SUPPORTS MAN
The Story of Human Geography

MAN AND HIS RECORDS
The Story of Writing

THE TONGUES OF MAN
The Story of Languages

HOW THE WORLD IS RULED
The Story of Government

MAN AND HIS RICHES
The Story of Economics

THIS MAN-MADE WORLD
The Story of Inventions

HOW THE WORLD LIVES
The Story of Sociology

∴

THOMAS S. ROCKWELL COMPANY
Publishers
CHICAGO

Publishers' Note

This book presents in popular form the present state of science. It has been reviewed by a specialist in this field of knowledge. An excerpt from his review follows:

> *"In my opinion this little volume does in a remarkably fascinating way what some of us have long felt needed to be done but have been unable to do ourselves, namely, to present to young people in simple, straightforward form the principal facts about the social world in which we live and the customs and heritages upon which it rests."*

Signed: LOUIS WIRTH,
Department of Sociology,
The University of Chicago.

Through the years customs have changed as much as man and man's way of living

MAN and HIS CUSTOMS

By

MARGARET FRY

Drawings by

FRANK J. FORSTNEGER

THOMAS S. ROCKWELL COMPANY
CHICAGO
1931

GT 85
.F7

COPYRIGHT, 1931, BY
THOMAS S. ROCKWELL CO.
CHICAGO

Printed in United States of America

AUG -3 1931

©Cl A 40596

CONTENTS

I WHAT IS CUSTOM? 11

Are customs important? What are some common customs? How did customs begin? Who started the customs? How did new customs start? How did customs change? How can a custom become a law? What happens if customs are broken? Do all customs seem natural? Are our customs better than those of other people?

II THE CUSTOM OF OWNING THINGS 23

Does everyone own things? What were the first things owned? What things are prized most? Was money used in trading? What kinds of money have been used? Why is money a help in buying and selling? What are weights and measures?

III THE CUSTOM OF WORK 35

Is work a custom? Are customs of work alike the world over? Is work a good custom? How was work made easier? Have inventions changed customs? How does business affect us? What is the real purpose of work?

IV THE CUSTOM OF FASHION 47

What are fashions? Are there more than one kind of fashions? Are there fashions in feet? Can faces be fashionable? Do fashions in hair change? Do these fashions affect our lives? Are there fashions in disease? What is important about fashions?

V THE CUSTOM OF ETIQUETTE 58

What is etiquette? How is it learned? Can rudeness be politeness? Do people kiss in all countries? Do politeness habits change? Are there rules for meeting people? Why do men walk nearest the street? What custom is changing now? Are all customs changing?

VI THE CUSTOM OF PLAY 70

Why do we play? How did play start? What are teams? What is the most popular game? Where is cricket played? Where did golf start? How is hockey played? Is dancing a kind of play? Why did Indians dance? Why do the Chinese dance? What was the May-dance? Are dances popular now? How did music begin? What were the first instruments? What is chess? What are dominoes? Where were playing cards invented? Is the theater a new amusement? What is an opera?

VII SOME BAD CUSTOMS 90

Are all customs good? What bad customs are there? What were the pyramids? What is a taboo? What are food taboos? What is caste? Was slavery a custom? Can sports be cruel? What is bullfighting?

VIII OUR OWN CUSTOMS ARE IMPORTANT 99

How old are customs? Why do customs last? Why do people stay together? Why did people follow the customs? Do customs make life harder? How are most things learned at first? What do we learn from others? What happens when our customs are not followed? Can we keep from learning customs? How do customs make life easy? Would life be safe without customs? Can we change bad customs? Are there more good than bad customs?

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Through the years customs have changed *(frontispiece)*
Soon everyone was wearing beads 14
They told their children about it 17
The government takes charge of punishing 21
People came to the man who made good axes 27
A yard was the distance from his nose to his thumb 32
The men were in great danger, for beasts were strong 37
Spinning could then be done by machine 40
The people thought the first auto was a joke 41
Traveling was different a few years ago 45
In Lincoln's time fashionable ladies wore hoop skirts 53
They leave their shoes outside 62
Etiquette often changes with fashion's orders 66
The players have to use their heads 73
The Indians had bear and buffalo dances 81
Chess requires a great deal of skill 84
All the time and effort was wasted 92
They wanted to belong to the crowd 101
Most boys want to grow up to be the same as their fathers 105
There are important lessons not in books 107

Chapter I

WHAT IS A CUSTOM?

A MAN who has made a study of human customs tells us that if people suddenly forgot all the knowledge and habits they had learned, their minds would still be just as good as ever. But all would be so helpless that in one month nine-tenths of them would die, and in six months practically all that were left would be dead.

Are customs important?

We simply could not learn over again fast enough all the inventions and customs that now make life so easy and pleasant for us. We should die of cold or starvation before we had time to find out how to do the countless things that today we seldom think of because they have become so natural to us.

When you got up this morning you dressed, you washed your face and hands, and you

brushed your teeth. Then you sat down at a table and ate your breakfast. Your food was placed before you in different kinds of dishes, and in eating the meal you used a knife, a fork, and a spoon. And later in the day you did all sorts of things in ways that have become habits.

What are some common customs?

But did you stop to think why you acted like that? Why did you take the time and trouble to see that your hands were clean before eating? Why did you sit, instead of stand, to eat? Why did you use a fork instead of your fingers? Why do you dress in certain kinds of clothes—shoes that lace, stockings that pull on around the legs, shirts that button?

If we stop to think about it we will find that every day of our lives all of us do many things without knowing exactly why. Why do we do these things? There must be a reason.

The answer is this: we do these things because everyone else does them. We do them because they make living easier and pleasanter. We do them without thinking because when we were very young we learned to do them

from our parents, neighbors, and friends. In other words, we do such things because it is the *custom* to do them. And every people believes that its ways of doing things are the right and best ways.

Custom, then, must be a strange and powerful thing to make thousands, even millions of people do the same things every day without even wondering whether or not they are the right things to do.

How did customs begin?

Long ago when there were only a few people on earth they probably did not wash their hands and faces before breakfast. We are sure they did not brush their teeth. The only clothes some of them wore were strings of beads, made from shells or stones, around their waists. Others, who lived in a colder climate, wore the skins of wild beasts which they had killed. Those who wore the beads knew that beads were the right kind of clothes to wear because the important people they knew wore them. It was the custom. And those who wore wild animal skins felt the same way. In their

family and in their tribe it was customary to wear animal skins. It was the right thing to do, then, because it was the custom.

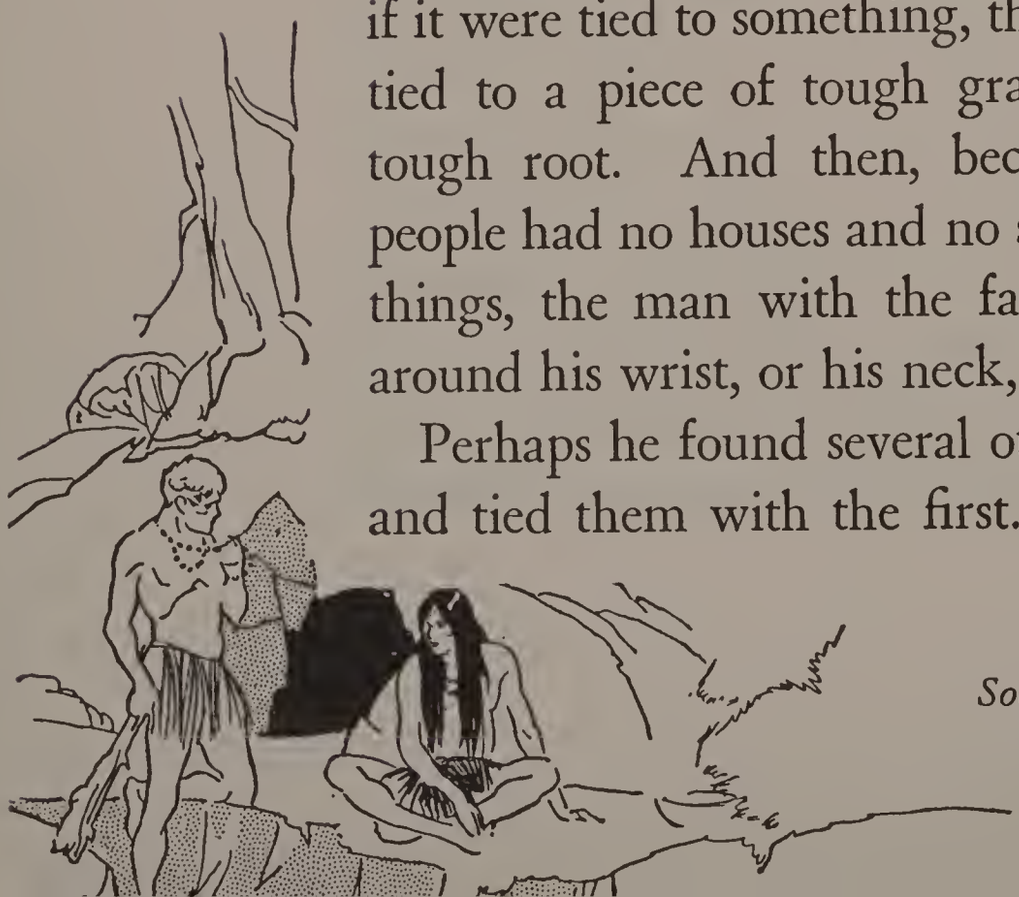
Who started the customs?

Somebody had to start these customs, of course. There is no way to tell exactly who started them and exactly how they were started. We can only guess at their beginning.

At first in the warmer places people probably wore no clothes at all. Then one day some man or woman picked up an unusual stone or shell. It might have been a queer shape, or a pretty color. This stone was different enough from other stones to make the finder want to keep it.

Probably because it would be easier to keep if it were tied to something, the stone was then tied to a piece of tough grass or vine, or a tough root. And then, because the earliest people had no houses and no safe place to keep things, the man with the fancy stone tied it around his wrist, or his neck, or his waist.

Perhaps he found several other pretty stones and tied them with the first. Then someone



Soon everyone was wearing beads

in his family or tribe noticed the new decoration, liked it, found another pretty stone and tied it to a vine, and wore it.

Soon everyone in the family and in the tribe was wearing beads made of shells and stones. By this time it was a custom to wear them. Anyone who did not have on his beads would have felt undressed. He would have been a little worried because he was not like all the rest.

How did new customs start?

When the first clumsy tools were made, when the first animal was killed, when the first fire was built, when the first food was cooked, when the first house was made—every one of these things started new customs. All of these things were very important to the people who had just learned about them. Here was a new idea, or a new way of doing things that was better than the old.

Man's first weapon was probably a clumsy club, a limb that he had torn from a tree. With this he could protect himself and kill some animals for food. But think how much

better off he was when he thought of sharpening a hard, flinty rock, and fastening it to the end of his club.

How did customs change?

Using a club for protection and for hunting was a custom. When a man made an ax of the club by fastening a rock to one end, he was changing an old custom to a new one. The new ax, he found, was much better than the old club. So he told his father, and his brothers, and the other members of the tribe. Soon they were all turning their clubs into axes. They all found that killing animals was easier with the new weapon. After that they always used axes. Hunting with stone axes had become a custom.

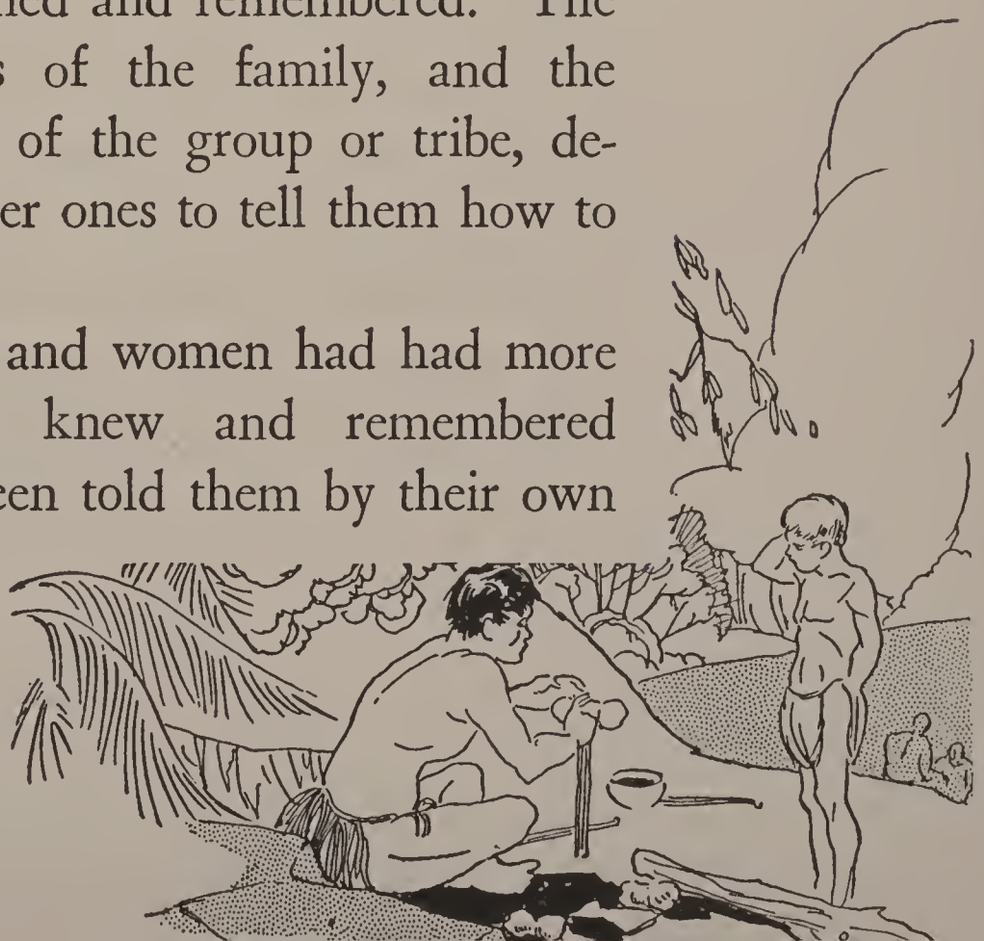
So it was with building fires, and cooking foods, and building shelters. Someone discovered something new or a new way to do things. Probably he hadn't been thinking about it. It is more likely that these new ideas were discovered by accident or were learned from neighboring tribes who had made the discovery in some way.

Once the new way of doing things was found, the other members of the group imitated it if they found it good. After that they told their children about it. The children grew up doing things in the way they had been told. They told their children, who told their children. And these last children followed a custom that was started long before they were born. Probably it was years and years before someone else found a new and better way of doing the same thing, or before the old custom was changed to a new.

How were they kept up?

So while we can only guess at the actual beginning of all the customs of the first people on earth, we can be sure of the way these customs were learned and remembered. The younger members of the family, and the younger members of the group or tribe, depended on the older ones to tell them how to do things.

The older men and women had had more experience. They knew and remembered things that had been told them by their own



They told their children about it

parents. Thus it was always the older ones who were respected and their ways followed.

Is respect a custom?

The little boy looked up to and admired his father. When he played games he probably pretended he was hunting and killing wild animals, just like his father. The little girl admired her mother, and watched her so that she might learn to cook food and to string beads.

The father and mother in turn respected the grandfathers and grandmothers of the family and the tribe. This made another custom. For it is as customary today as it was in the first few thousand years on earth, to respect those who are older than we are. It is a custom to respect and love those who teach us the customs we must learn.

Are laws customs?

Some customs do not always stay just customs. Some of them grow into laws. Even the earliest people had customs that were almost laws, or that became laws. They were not written as our laws of today are, but one was punished if one did not obey them.

A member of a tribe, if he wanted a wife,

might capture any girl or woman he wanted and keep her as long as he could. He may have had to use his club to get her to go with him or stay with him. If he were stronger than she, then he succeeded in keeping her.

If the girl's family and her own tribe did not like to have her dragged off to live with another tribe they made war upon the man and his tribe to get her back.

How can a custom become a law?

Finally some of the tribes decided that it would save life and bloodshed if the men picked their wives from certain other tribes who would agree not to fight about the matter. Or a man might purchase his wife. Thus we have a custom that grows into a rule, or law. A man might capture a wife from certain tribes and be sure there would be no war. If he was daring or reckless enough to capture a woman from one of the tribes outside the agreement, then his own fellow tribesmen were not bound to help him if his wife's family and tribe sought revenge. He would have to take the punishment himself.

Today we have marriage laws. These laws say that men and women cannot be married until they are of a certain age. One must have a license to be married. The marriage may be performed only by ministers or priests or certain officers of the law. After the marriage is performed it must be recorded in the books kept by the government for that use.

This seems a long way from the time when a man got a wife simply by capturing her or buying her. But our marriage laws have really grown very slowly from the first rules about picking out a wife.

What happens if customs are broken?

As long as people have the same customs, these customs are enough to keep others from doing wrong. And when someone does some injury to another, an injury which is against the customs, those who are offended or the whole group punish the offender.

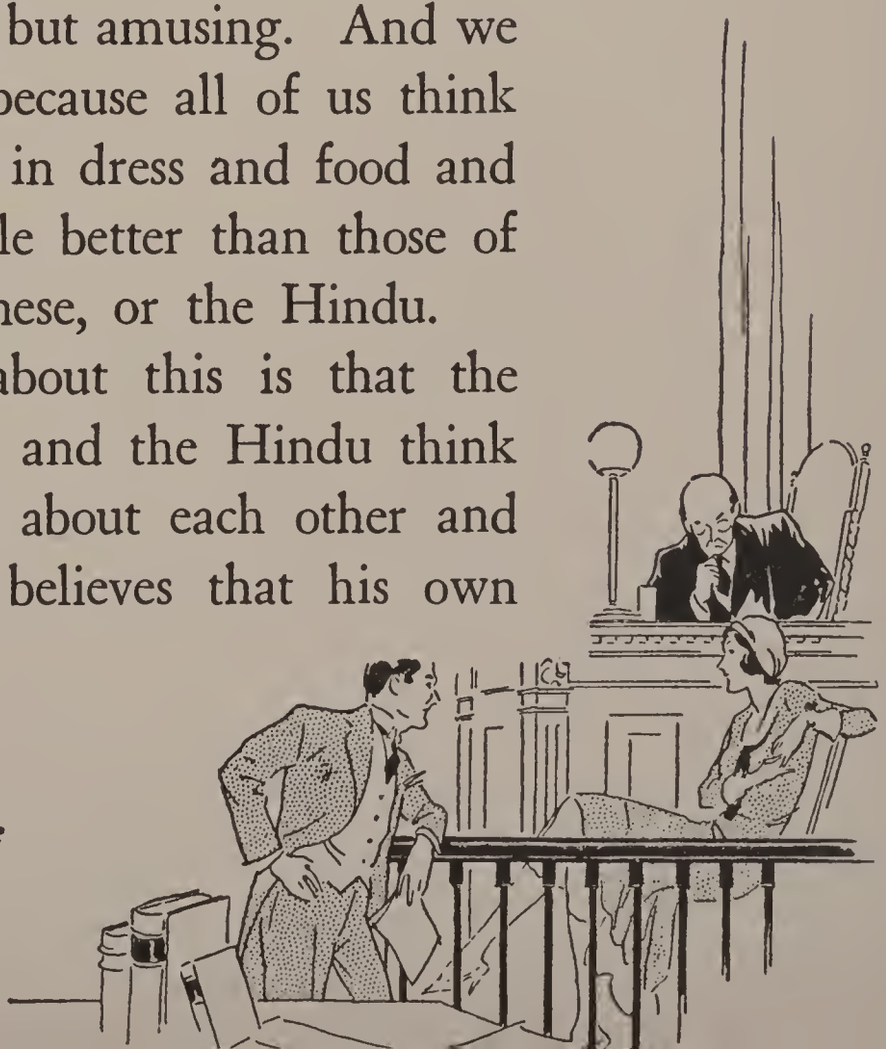
This custom has grown into a law which protects us all. It is against the law to kill another person. But when someone does kill another, the dead person's family is not re-

sponsible for punishing the offender. The government takes charge, finds out who did the killing, and punishes the person who did it. No one need punish the wrongs done him when there are laws and governments to do it for him.

Do all customs seem natural?

Most of the customs of early people seem very strange to us. Even the customs of other people living today seem queer. In France or Holland or Germany people eat food that is not quite like ours. In India and Japan and China the food and customs of eating it seem even stranger to us. We think the styles of clothing in other countries are funny and uncomfortable compared to our own. We think them interesting but amusing. And we think them amusing because all of us think that our own customs in dress and food and conduct are just a little better than those of the Japanese, the Chinese, or the Hindu.

The strange part about this is that the Japanese, the Chinese, and the Hindu think exactly the same way about each other and about us. Each one believes that his own



The government takes charge of punishing

customs are the best ones. And they are. That is to say, they are the best for him.

Are our customs better than those of other peoples?

Every tribe of people, every little group of farmers, every little town and settlement, every country—all developed their own ways of doing things. And after a time, when this way of doing things became common to all, it became a custom.

So it is that the customs we have, no matter how different they are from those in other parts of the earth, are good customs for us, because our kind of people made them, and they are the best we know, although some day we may find better ones.

Chapter II

THE CUSTOM OF OWNING THINGS

EVERYONE has certain things that are his very own. Even tiny babies soon get the idea that certain toys are theirs and will cry if someone else, even another baby, picks them up. All of us have clothes that were bought or made especially for us. Most of us have books that are our own. We call these things possessions or property. And whether we have worked to earn them or whether they have been given to us, we like the feeling that we own them.

Does everyone own things?

It seems strange that there was a time on earth when people did not own anything. Of course this was at the very beginning. People had no clothing to own because they did not wear any. They had no houses to live in and own; they slept at night in trees. It is likely

they didn't very often sleep in the same tree, so that they never got the feeling that a particular limb in a certain tree was their own. Probably the tribe owned everything at first.

What were the first things owned?

Having no homes, of course, when they first got the idea of owning a thing, the thing had to be something they could carry with them. It is probable that the clubs men used for protection were the first things that were owned. Pretty or unusual shells or stones were probably owned about the same time. The stone or shell was small and could be carried easily, especially if tied to a vine or root. Probably the finder of the stone or shell thought there was magic in it, because it was different from the others he had seen. After he had carried it for a while and it had been admired by others in the tribe, then he was sure there was magic in it.

By this time he liked it more than ever. He knew it was something worth having because other people had admired it. He was beginning to get the feeling of ownership,

and it would take a great deal to part him from that stone or shell.

How did magic start?

As the world grew a little older and the first people grew more thoughtful, they began to see magic and spirits in many such objects—feathers, tufts of fur, bones, animal teeth. As soon as people thought these things had magic in them they became very valuable things to own. Everybody wanted them because they would keep the evil spirits away. Evil spirits, they thought, were what made people sick. They were also supposed to chase the animals away, so that the hunting was bad, and to keep fish from being caught.

Most of the little objects were worn as ornaments. That way the owners were less likely to lose them, and when wearing them they would be guarded all the time from the evil spirits.

When people began making tools, stone axes, fish hooks, and arrow heads, these all became valuable as property, too. There was so little to work with that it took days or

weeks to shape a stone for an ax. After a man had spent that much time making one tool he was naturally careful to keep it in his possession. It was only natural for him to feel that probably his ax was better than others, too, after he had put so many hours and such hard work into the making of it.

What things are prized most?

Even today we find that we are very careful of some of the things we own. Some boys have pocket knives which they would not trade for anything. Carpenters and other workmen have some tools that they like very much, and which seem to do better work for them than others do. A woman who does a lot of sewing will probably like one pair of scissors better than any other because they seem to cut better. These feelings, the same today as when the world was very young, make tools valuable to the people who own and use them.

Sometimes one man could make better ax heads than another. Since having a good ax made it possible to kill more animals, and

People came to the man who made good axes and offered things in exchange

How did trading begin?

to chop off more tree branches for fires, the maker of axes would become an important man in the group. Others would come to him to ask for one of his axes. We can imagine how they bargained in their queer talk that was mostly grunts and gestures.

"I need one of your axes."

"But I need them too. I spent many hours on them. Make your own axes."

"But your axes are better than mine. Look, I have brought all these fishhooks. See how well they are made. I caught many fish with them yesterday. I will give you two of these for the ax you have in your hand."

"No. It took me much longer to make this ax than it took you to make those fishhooks."

"Three fishhooks then for the ax."

"Not enough. But if you will give me the feather and shell you wear, along with the fishhooks, you may have the ax."

Probably they were not able to strike a bargain that day. The man with the fishhooks was very proud of the feather and

shell. Had they not kept him well and strong? And had he not killed a great animal soon after he started wearing them?

In the end if he decided he wanted the fine ax more than the magic feather and shell, there would be a trade. Probably the first trade was between neighboring tribes because one tribe had things which the other needed and could not make.

Was money used in trading?

This is how buying and selling property started. For thousands of years after people started trading there was no money as we know it today. People sold things and bought things, but they did it by barter or trade. This means that they exchanged some property they owned for something they wanted.

Naturally, this led to the use of some very curious things for money. The Greenland Eskimos laughed at gold and silver coin when they were first offered it in exchange for animal skins. They would rather have had steel, which was more useful to them.

Some people have used salt for money.

What kinds of money have been used?

Others have used cloth, beads, tobacco, or coffee. One tribe of people used fishhooks, because fishhooks were their most important tool. Stones, shells, cattle, pigs have all been used to buy other things. Pieces of metal, furs, slaves, sugar, whale teeth, iron spades, brass wires, cakes of beeswax have all been used, too. In some parts of the earth many of these things are still used. And there are still many places in this country where farmers bring their butter and eggs to the store in town and trade them for coffee, sugar, tea, other things to eat and drink, and clothes to wear.

All of us have pasted a postage stamp on a letter. But did you ever stop to think that the postage stamp is a kind of money? People used to have to pay actual money for the postage due on a letter when it was delivered to them. Now we paste a little stamp on our letter and it is taken wherever we want it to go, by train or boat or airplane. The stamp is really a kind of money that gets mail delivered.

In some towns and cities we buy street-car tickets and use them instead of money to ride on street cars. Most of us have seen milk cards that are marked off or punched as we get our milk, or tickets that conductors punch in exchange for a ride on a train.

Why is money a help in buying and selling?

It is certainly easier for us to do our buying and selling than it was for the people who had no money. We work, or our parents work, and are paid money for working. We take this money to the stores to buy food and clothing and other things we need.

We can buy houses to live in or pay rent to live in them. We buy furniture to put in them. We buy books and radio sets and tickets for the theater.

Think how much more difficult it would be if for everything that we needed we had to trade some other piece of property that we owned.

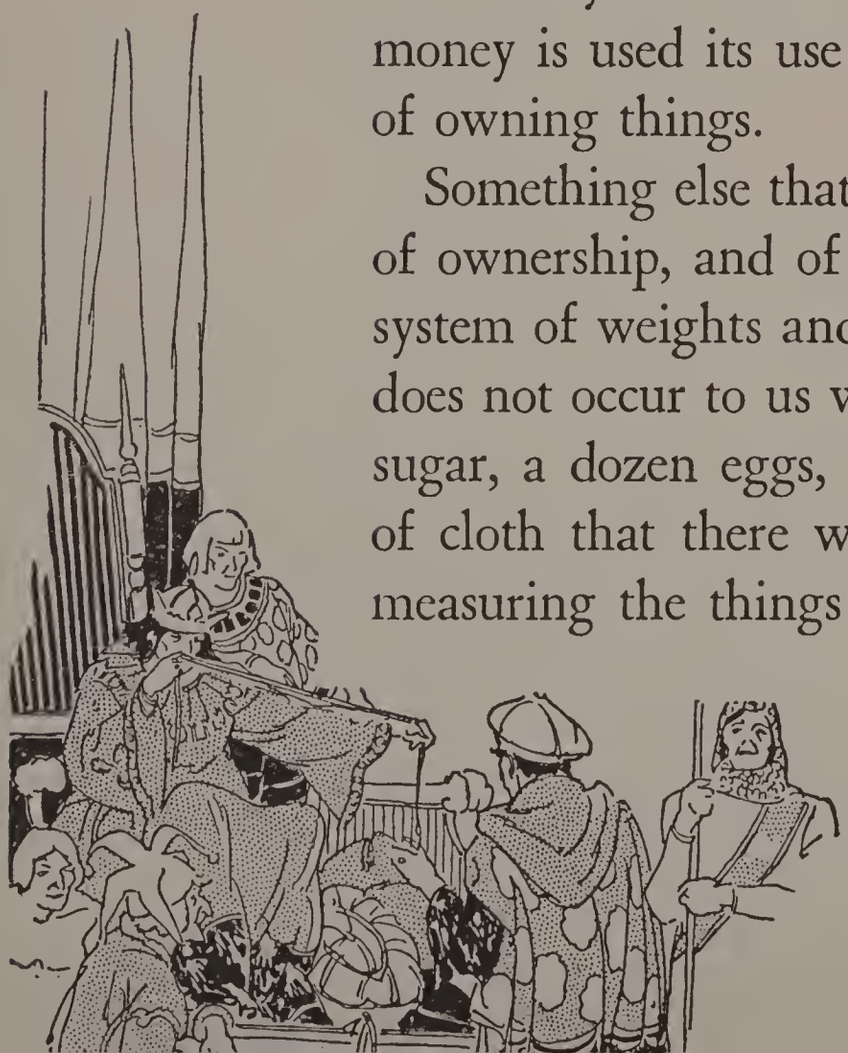
We have found that using money is the easiest way to buy and sell. To every one who lives in this county, a dime is worth ten

cents and a dollar is worth ten dimes. We have things made even easier by the use of paper money. Think how your pockets would be loaded if you were to carry ten or twelve silver dollars. We can carry that amount in paper money without any trouble, and always know that the paper money is just as good as the coins would be.

Is using money a custom?

Using money for exchange is a custom with us. It is a custom with all the civilized people on earth. All money is not the same in value, for in different countries different kinds of money are used. But it is all used as we use it: to buy and sell. And everywhere that money is used its use grew out of the custom of owning things.

Something else that grew out of the custom of ownership, and of buying and selling, is a system of weights and measures. It generally does not occur to us when we buy a pound of sugar, a dozen eggs, a ton of coal, or a yard of cloth that there was once no sure way of measuring the things that we use.



A yard was the distance from his nose to his thumb

Such a system for measuring was not worked out until long after people learned to use figures. In fact, until quite recent times, people were still using very rough ways of measuring things. To measure length they used the palm of the hand (that is, the width of the hand), the foot, and the "cubit", or the length from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger. Since no two persons would measure exactly the same for any of these, we can see that this way of measuring was just a little better than guessing.

What are weights and measures?

There came a time, of course, when people realized that their customs for measuring were bad, and slowly they changed the customs. One of the kings of England set the yard measure that we use today. It was the distance from the point of his nose to the end of his thumb. For a long time people used a foot measure that was over thirteen inches long.

Ways of measuring weights came a little later when another English king said that thirty-two grains of wheat should weigh one

pennyweight, that twenty pence (English pennies) should weigh one ounce, and that twelve ounces should be one pound. This custom kept on changing, too. Now we say that sixteen ounces make one pound.

Why are they important customs?

A very important thing about the custom of measuring things correctly is that it has made it possible for inventors, scientists, and machine workers to measure things to a thousandth of an inch. This is quite different from merely guessing. Because of it we can have such things as automobiles, airplanes, telescopes, and many important things that we use every day because these things have to be made according to careful measurements in order to work correctly.

Chapter III

THE CUSTOM OF WORK

EVERYBODY, as a rule, has to work. Young children, when they reach a certain age, must put away their toys. Little girls like to help their mothers with the housework. Small boys generally have certain things to do every day to help their fathers. As soon as we go to school we have to work to learn things. When we are through with school we work to earn a living. Before we are old enough to earn a living for ourselves, someone else has been working to earn it for us.

Is work a custom?

The hats, the shoes and stockings, the dresses and coats, everything we wear means a certain amount of work that someone has done. Everything we eat means work. Everything we must have to live and be comfortable means work for somebody.

We are taught to like work and not to be ashamed of it. Even people who have so much money that they would never need to work again often keep right on working because they like it. Work is now a general custom.

Has it always been so?

People have not always thought work was a fine thing. Some tribal folk thought work tiresome—that is, such work as plowing the ground to grow food, and making garments—and unworthy of men. That was the work for women to do. The men, they thought, being brave and strong, were not meant to be doing such things as putting seeds in the ground. They should be out hunting wild and fierce animals, or fighting other tribes of men just as wild and fierce as the animals.

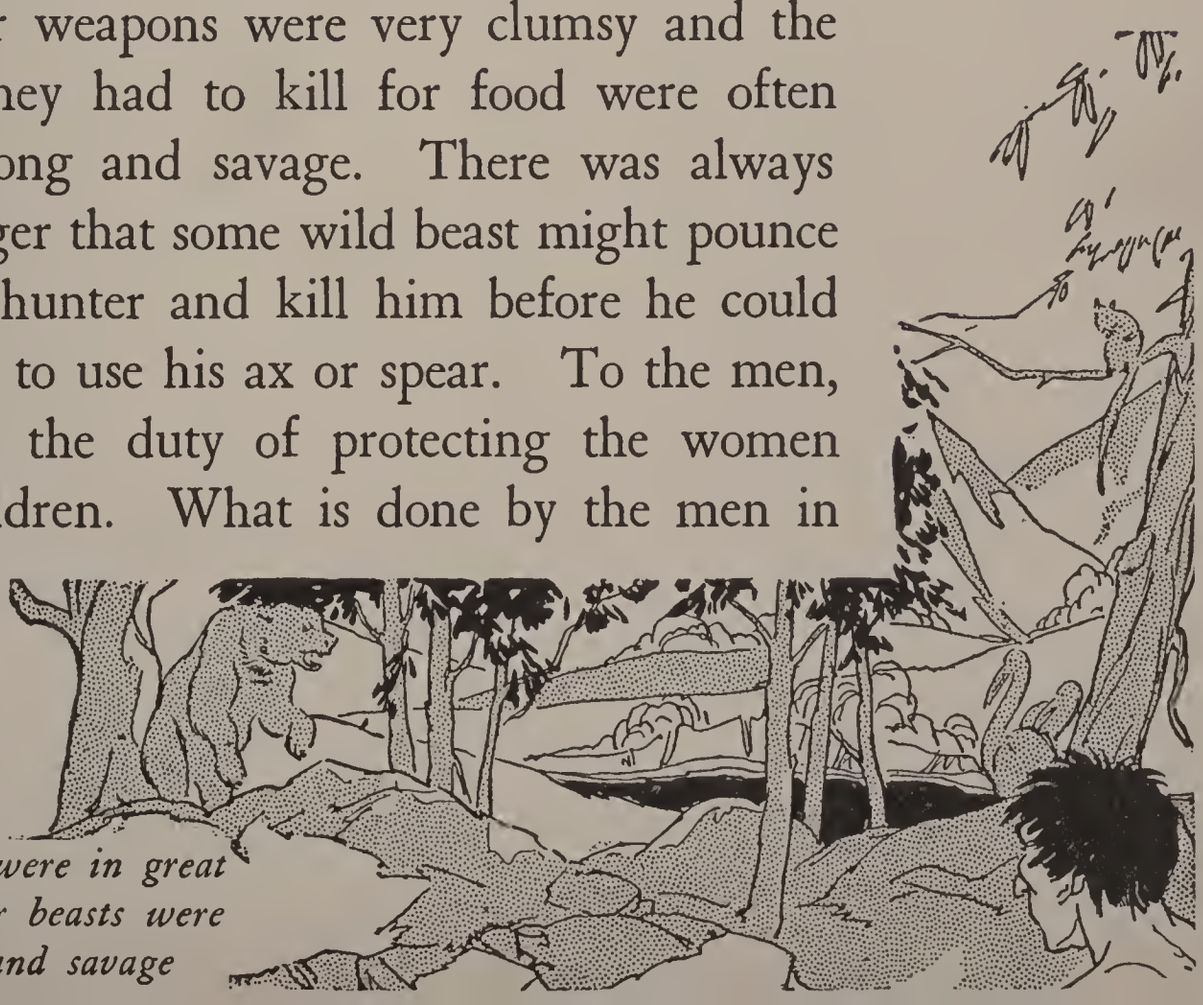
So it was that to women fell the work of scraping the animal skins and stretching them out to dry. The women had to make them into clothes to wear. They also had to prepare the meat for eating. They had to

gather wood for the fire and see that the fire did not go out. They had to make the clumsy dishes that were used to store food. They had to scratch the ground with sticks and plant seeds so that food might grow near their homes.

Sometimes women even made or helped make the spears and arrow-heads that the men used to hunt with, although this was usually thought to be part of the hunting and men might do it.

Are customs of work alike the world over?

This sounds, of course, as if the women had to work very hard. They did. But it does not mean that the men led an easy life. Their lives were in constant danger, for their weapons were very clumsy and the beasts they had to kill for food were often very strong and savage. There was always the danger that some wild beast might pounce upon a hunter and kill him before he could even try to use his ax or spear. To the men, too, fell the duty of protecting the women and children. What is done by the men in



The men were in great danger, for beasts were strong and savage

one tribe may be done by women in another.

In some places men found that animals could help them in their work, and in other places they used captured men from other tribes whom they held as slaves.

Is work a good custom?

Even much later, when the world had grown more civilized, there was still some people who thought it degrading for men to work. The Greeks, who were very wise people for their time, thought that to work for money was unworthy. To them it was much more important for a man to spend his time in study so that he might always be learning more and more.

The Romans, too, thought it was not right for a man to work. To work for money would have made them ashamed. By fighting they could take property from other people. And that, they thought, was a much finer way of getting possession of the things they needed or wanted. Women and slaves did the work at home.

Only in the last few hundred years has it

become a custom to work. Now, instead of despising work we respect it as something fine and noble. Nobody is ashamed of working; rather, we are proud of it. For we know that by hard work even the poorest of us may become better off. All of us have a chance to get some of the things we want most if we are willing to work hard for them.

What changed work from something to be ashamed of to something to be proud of?

How did it come to be so?

It took a great many things to bring about such a big change. One of the most important of these was the discovery of new continents. This meant that there were new places for people to live. Those who were unhappy where they were could go to the new places and begin again. Then, too, there was more chance of getting rich quickly in a new land where everyone started with the same opportunities.

It was a long time after Columbus discovered this wonderful new land of America that people came to live here. Even then

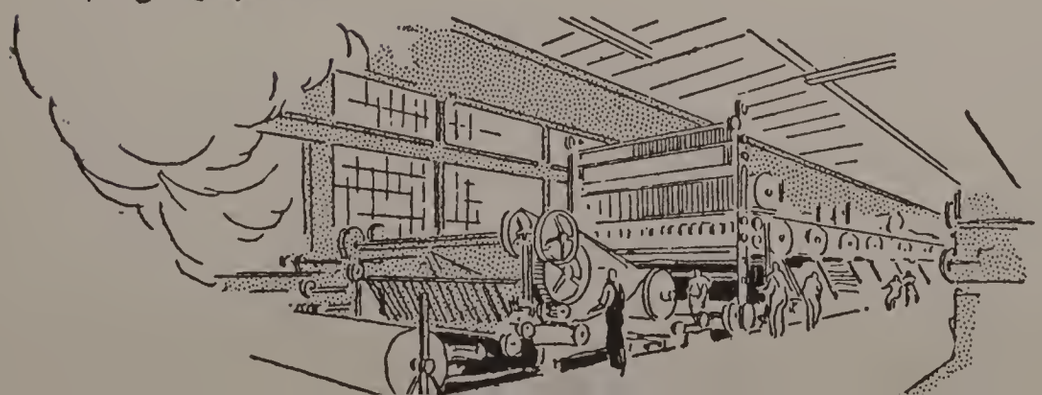
there were not very many of them, and life was even harder here than it had been in the old countries. They had to work very hard, but very few of them chose to go back. Most of them were happy here and most of them knew that there was wealth here for those who were willing to work for it.

How was work made easier?

New inventions were another thing that changed people's ideas about work. Many of the new inventions made work much easier. There were better ways of spinning thread and weaving cloth, so that all the work that had been done very slowly by hand could be done very quickly by machines.

There were new tools for the farmer and new tools for the housewife. There were machines that would make shoes and machines that would knit stockings. There was a new kind of boat invented that was run by steam, and there were steam engines that pulled trains from one town to another.

A way was found to flash messages through the air. It was called the telegraph. And



Spinning could then be done by machine

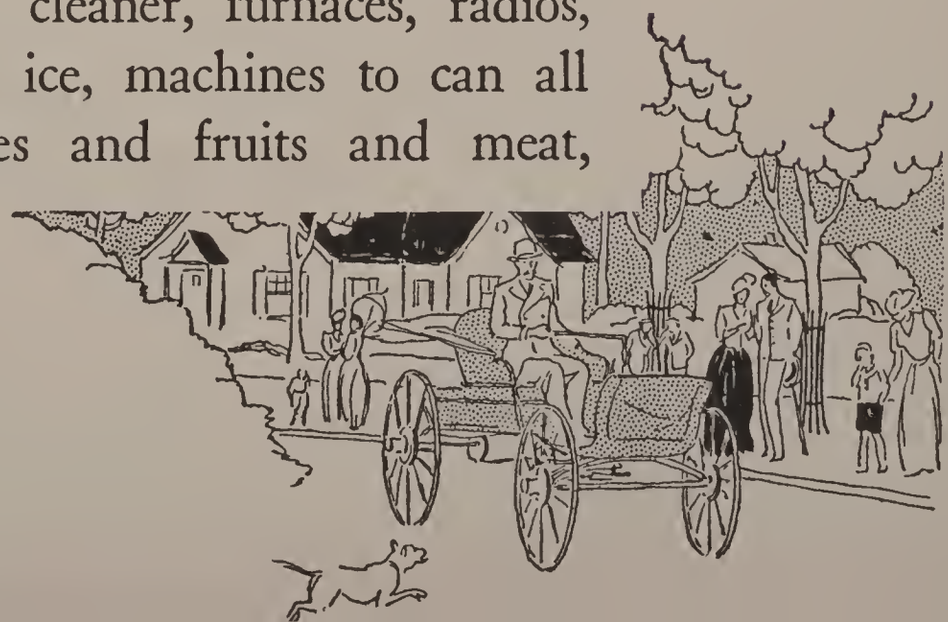
then someone invented a queer machine that you could talk into and someone listening, miles away, might hear you. That was the telephone.

Have inventions changed customs?

Another funny thing was seen on the streets one day, and everybody laughed. It was a buggy that went without having a horse to pull it. People thought this was a big joke. Today we can scarcely count the automobiles we see on the streets.

Two men worked on a machine which they thought they could make fly through the air. People came from miles around to laugh at them, too. Now people fly across the country in airplanes, Lindbergh flew across the Atlantic Ocean, and Byrd flew over the North and the South Poles.

Along with these bigger inventions were smaller ones which also changed people's ways of living. There was the sewing machine, the vacuum cleaner, furnaces, radios, machines to make ice, machines to can all kinds of vegetables and fruits and meat,



The people thought the auto was a joke

washing machines, electric irons, toasters, and coffee pots.

It seems strange to think that there was a time when people lived without all these things. It is not hard to see what a difference all of these things have made in the way we live and the way we work.

Did they affect many people?

When a machine was invented which could make a stocking quicker than it could be made by hand, it meant that people could have more stockings to wear. There would be more cotton and more wool needed, which meant more work for the farmers. The cotton and wool had to be turned into thread, and that meant work for the people who ran machines which turned wool and cotton into thread. More people were needed to sell stockings, and that meant more work.

The people who used to do these things by hand had to find some other way to make a living. At the same time, the business of buying and selling was getting to be bigger and bigger. Wagon loads, train loads, and boat

loads of wheat, potatoes and meat would be sent from the country to the city. The city would send back to the country cloth, shoes, furniture, and tools.

How does business affect us?

Not only did the trading between the city and the country grow; the trading between different parts of the world grew just as fast. Big boats went into every ocean and stopped at every port. Merchants took coal from the mines to the factories, and sewing machines and plows and overalls and dresses from the factories to the miners. The custom that started thousands of years before with two savages trading their tools has grown into a huge business called world commerce.

All this growth of business and trade has made a great difference in the way we live. People are paid more now for the work they do. This means that all of us have more money to spend. Having more money has raised our standard of living. "Standard of living" simply means the things we think we must have to be comfortable.

What things do we think we must have?

Let us name some of the things we think we must have. First of all we think we must have a house to live in—not just a rough building with walls and a roof, but a snug house that will keep us warm in winter and cool in summer. We must have rugs on the floor, curtains at the windows, pictures on the walls. There must be a separate room for a bathtub and a toilet. There must be hot and cold water by turning a faucet. We want a stove that cooks food by turning on the gas or the electricity. We want soft beds with warm covers. Most homes could not get along without a telephone, a radio or a phonograph, books and magazines for everyone, and toys for the children. We must each have several changes of clothing that is good enough so that we are not ashamed of the way we look when we are with other people. These are the things we think we must have. We would be very unhappy if any of them were taken from us.

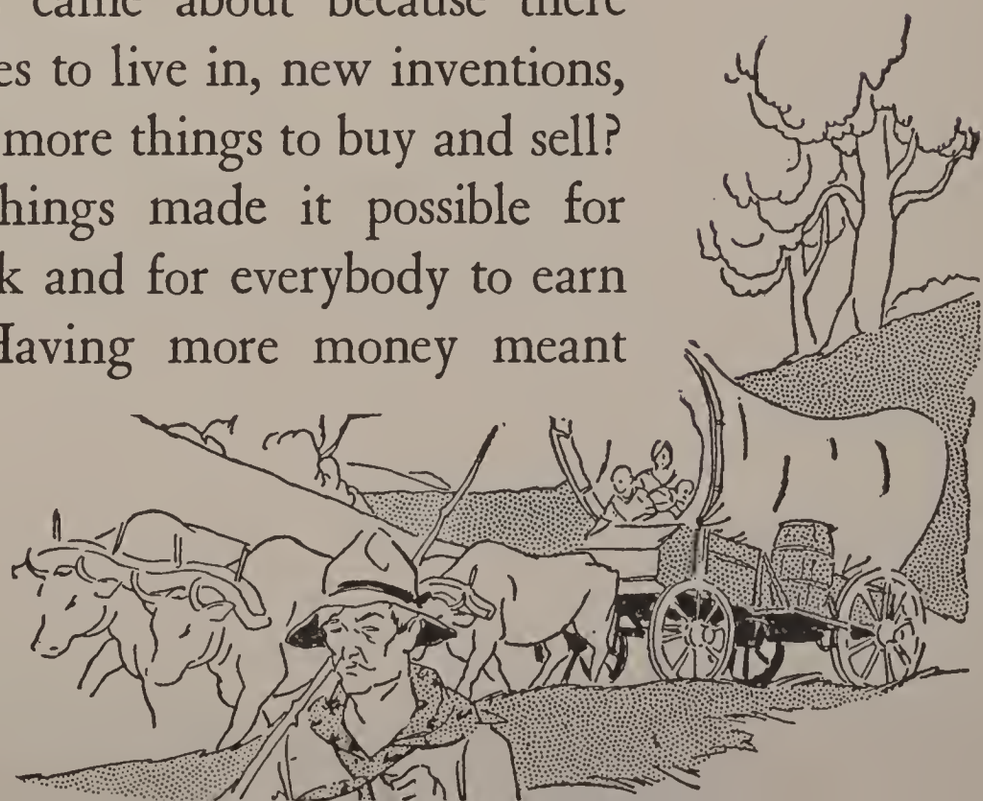
What about our grandparents' homes? We

know that their homes often did not have a white porcelain tub which they could fill with warm water by turning a faucet. Many of them even had to get their cold water from a pump in the back yard. They did not have radios. Most of them did not have telephones. Sometimes their homes were heated by fireplaces and sometimes by stoves, but seldom by a furnace such as heats our houses and apartments. Grandmother, perhaps, had to keep a wood fire burning in an iron stove in order to cook for the family. Grandmother and grandfather probably carried the wood in from a wood pile back of the house.

Have these always been necessary?

Would you like to have lived then? Can you imagine how different it must have been from the way we live today? Can you see how all these changes came about because there were new countries to live in, new inventions, more work to do, more things to buy and sell?

All of these things made it possible for everybody to work and for everybody to earn more money. Having more money meant



Traveling was different a few years ago

that people could have more of the things they wanted. Having these things turned them from luxuries into necessities. A luxury is something you want but don't need. A necessity is something you must have. A lot of things that used to be luxuries are now necessities, such as a bathtub or electric lights.

Slowly, then, people's ideas about work changed. If work was the thing that would bring a person such things as fine clothes, good food, and comfortable houses, then work was something to be proud of. So it became a custom to work.

What is the real purpose of work?

People no longer worked just enough to get a little to eat and a place to sleep. It grew to be the custom to work hard so that one might have good things to eat, and a fine place to live in. It is a custom now to work just as well as we can so that we may get as many of the fine things in the world as we can. The custom of work gives everyone a chance to have more of the things that he wants.

Chapter IV

THE CUSTOM OF FASHION

IF YOU are a boy and all the other boys in your class at school are wearing long trousers, you think you must have long trousers, too, don't you? And, if you had to, you would give up a lot of other things to get them, wouldn't you?

What are fashions?

If you are a girl and all the girls you know start wearing pleated skirts and sweaters when all you have is a one-piece dress, you will feel badly, won't you? You will ask your mother for a pleated skirt and sweater. And you won't be really happy until you are dressed like other girls.

Fathers and mothers are like that, too. Everyone is like that. We all want to be "in fashion." It is strange, isn't it, that fashion is so very important to all of us? Sometimes

we will even give up things to eat, or other things important to our comfort, just so that we may have some new kind of clothing that is fashionable.

We want to be in fashion so that people will like us and think well of us, and not regard us as "queer" or unfriendly.

Fashion is one of man's customs. Although the fashions we have today are new, the custom of having fashions is one of the oldest customs of all. The early people who were not in fashion were just as unhappy about it as we are today.

Are there more than one kind of fashions?

When we speak of fashions we usually think of only one kind. That is the fashion of dress. With dress, however, go some other fashions which cannot very well be separated from it. We call them all personal fashions, and they mean fashions in dress, jewelry, hairdressing, hats, shoes, and so on.

Take the matter of shoes, for instance. No woman of today feels that she is rightly clothed unless her feet are dressed in shoes which

match her dress and suit the place. There are street shoes, afternoon shoes, dancing slippers, golf shoes, and bathing shoes. There is a time and place to wear each one of them. Anyone who wore golf shoes with a party dress would seem odd to us.

Are there fashions in feet?

The custom of dressing the feet is not a new one. People have even done more than simply dress their feet. For hundreds of years in China it was fashionable for women to have very tiny feet. Chinese ladies bound the feet of their baby girls. The bandages were kept on very tightly until the Chinese girl was grown. She was very proud then of the feet that had not been able to grow with her. They were bent and ugly and crippled. To the Chinese girl of that time, size was all that mattered. She was in fashion because her feet were tiny. Having tiny feet was meant to show that she had so many servants that she did not have to walk, as common people do. It is now being given up, for all bad customs have to go, sooner or later.

Can faces be fashionable?

There have actually been fashions in faces, too. This seems odd, because, after all, we are born with the faces we have and cannot do very much to change them. But tribal people did a lot to change their faces. In Samoa it was thought beautiful to have a very flat nose and face. Samoan mothers pressed their babies' faces to make them flat.

Other such folk thought it lovely to have very large lips. This they accomplished by slitting the lips when the children were young and putting small round pieces of wood in the slit. As the lips stretched, larger pieces of wood were used, until finally when they were grown the tribal man or woman had lips almost as big as saucers.

Large ears were thought beautiful by some tribes. To be in the fashion they pierced holes in the lobes of their ears and pulled them down with heavy weights until the ears hung down over the shoulder.

We think these fashions silly and ugly. We do not have such painful fashions, but

we still have fashions in faces. Many women do not consider themselves well dressed unless they have a little rouge on their cheeks and powder on their noses. Most men shave their faces every day so that they will not have beards. Not so very many years ago in this country it was considered wicked for a girl to put powder on her face, and the men, even the young men, all wore beards and moustaches. In those days people wanted to look older, because older people had many more rights than young people. Nowadays, everybody wants to look young, because we think more highly of youth than we used to.

Do we have fashions in faces?

Fashions in hair follow those in dress. Tribal people have invented many strange and wonderful ways of dressing the hair. But no savage ever had a hairdress stranger than those worn by fashionable ladies several hundred years ago. Then the hair was powdered snow-white, curled, and arranged in a tower of puffs and curls that was sometimes eighteen inches high.

Do fashions in hair change?

For a long time men wore their hair long or wore wigs of long hair. We all know how George Washington looked with a ribbon tied to his hair at the back of his neck. A little before that time men wore wigs of hair powdered white, with curls that came below the shoulders. Can you imagine your father going to work wearing a wig like that? Yet in those days no man would have thought of going out without his wig.

Not very long ago women began having their hair cut short. Many people groaned and shook their heads at such a terrible idea. Today we are quite used to seeing mothers and grandmothers with bobbed hair. No one thinks it strange, because we are used to the fashion. We think it is a good thing, because it is easier to take care of short hair.

There are fashions in ornaments, too. When primitive people had little to use for decoration besides shells and feathers they tattooed themselves. They were willing to suffer a great deal of pain just to be fashion-

In Lincoln's time fashionable ladies wore hoop skirts that were very wide

How about ornaments?

able. Some Indian women have been seen wearing six quarts of beads. Think how heavy they would be to carry around! Other tribal women wore iron rings weighing four to six pounds around their arms and legs and necks. Some of them wore iron beads as large as potatoes. A string of these beads would weigh thirty-five pounds and the women had to walk very slowly to be able to carry them. But they were fashionable!

In Abraham Lincoln's time ladies wore hoop skirts. They were not very heavy, but they were so wide that they caused trouble in getting in and out of carriages and through narrow places. Still they were fashionable. Years after that women wore the "hobble skirt." It was so tight around the ankles that walking was really very hard.

Nowadays, women wear much shorter skirts, because they have become fashionable. Short skirts are much more comfortable and cleanly, for they are not tight, and they do not trail on the ground, gathering up dirt and germs.

The custom of fashion does not stop with personal fashions. There is a fashion that tells us how we should build our homes and how we should live. The houses that are built today look very different from the ones built a hundred years ago. Fashions in buildings have changed. Fashions in furniture, wall paper, rugs, and dishes have changed since then, too. The new fashions make for more light and air, and for greater cleanliness.

Do these fashions affect our lives?

With these changes in houses and furnishings comes also a change in the way we live. Many of the things that people ate hundreds of years ago are not eaten now, because we have better food and ways of cooking. We also eat many things now that used to be thought worthless or even poisonous.

It is fashionable to be clean now. There was a time when people did not think much about dirt. It was much harder to be clean then than now. People used to throw their garbage into the streets because they had no better place for it and did not know that it

would spread disease. No one would think of doing that now, because the custom has changed.

Are there fashions in disease?

There have even been fashions in disease. When doctors first found that our appendix was something we could get along without, it was quite fashionable to have an appendicitis operation. Later, when doctors found that many times other sickness was caused by unhealthy tonsils, it was fashionable to have your tonsils taken out, whether they were unhealthy or not. Most people, of course, did not have enough money to have fashionable diseases. These fashions, fortunately, did not last very long. Bad fashions, as we have seen, tend to die out.

We have fashions in language, too. The slang words used now are not the ones that were used ten years ago, perhaps even five years ago. Some words that are not slang are gradually dropped from the language. Then we say they are obsolete. There are always new words being made. Language does not

change very much, but it has fashions like almost everything else.

What is important about fashions?

The important thing about fashions is not that they are sometimes silly or sometimes uncomfortable, or even painful, but that they are a custom. They have been a custom since people first lived on earth. They will probably always be a custom. So long as they are, most people would rather be "in fashion" than out. And as time goes on, bad fashions pass away, and better ones take their place.

Chapter V

THE CUSTOM OF ETIQUETTE

What is etiquette?

EVERY man and boy knows that he should take his hat off when he steps into a house. We all say "thank you" when we are given something. We say "hello" when we meet someone we know and "goodbye" when we leave him. We know that there are certain things we may do or say at the dinner table and other things we may not.

There are special words for the customs that tell us how we should behave. They are *etiquette* and *politeness*. Many large books have been written about them. Yet all of us learn about etiquette and politeness without reading books. They are things we learn along with learning to talk and walk.

Probably you have held out a toy in front of a baby sister or brother and said, "Say please."

Very soon the baby learns to make a sound that means "please" to us, so that he may get the things he wants. "Now say thank you," we tell the babies, after we have given them something they want. Before long they are saying "ta ta" or "tank oo." The sounds they make may sound funny to us, but by making those sounds the baby is learning etiquette.

How is it learned?

By the time we go to kindergarten all of us know how to eat at the table. Babies, like savages, would rather eat with their hands. When they are first fed with a spoon they do not like it. Soon they get used to being fed with a spoon, and when they are old enough to feed themselves, they know that it is right to use a spoon to put food into the mouth and that it is wrong to use the hands. A little later they learn to use a fork. And still later they learn to use a knife to cut with and to spread butter or jelly on bread. By this time they have a good start in learning table manners, which are an important part of etiquette.

Other kinds of etiquette we also learn

gradually from the time we are very small, so that we do not know we are learning.

Is it the same everywhere?

Every group of people has different customs of etiquette and politeness. Our own rules of good conduct might seem impolite to other groups.

Perhaps you have heard people say, "When in Rome do as the Romans do." This means that Rome or Turkey or the United States each has its own customs and that when you are in any of those places it is better to follow the customs of etiquette and politeness used by the people there. People in different parts of the earth know more now than they used to about each other and each other's customs. The telegraph, the cables, trains, steamships, and airplanes have brought us closer together.

In China people know that our manners are not like theirs. If we were visiting in China and made mistakes in politeness, our mistakes would be overlooked. The Chinese would realize that we did not know their customs and they would be curious to know ours.

One great difference in polite custom is seen in the ways we show respect. Western men—that is all Americans and Europeans—uncover their heads to show respect. When they meet a lady, when the flag passes by, when they enter a house or a church, they take off their hats.

What are some of the great differences?

Orientals—that is, men of the countries in the East—cover their heads to show respect. They would never think of entering a temple without a covering of some sort on their heads. Instead, they remove their shoes. To us this seems queer and a big nuisance. Most Orientals wear a kind of shoe that the foot slips into and out of easily, so that this custom is not inconvenient for them. In front of every temple you will see row after row of shoes that people have left there before going inside. As they come out they must all stop to put their shoes on. We may wonder how they ever get their own shoes back, but evidently this causes little trouble, for the custom has been used for hundreds of years. Even the Orientals who are

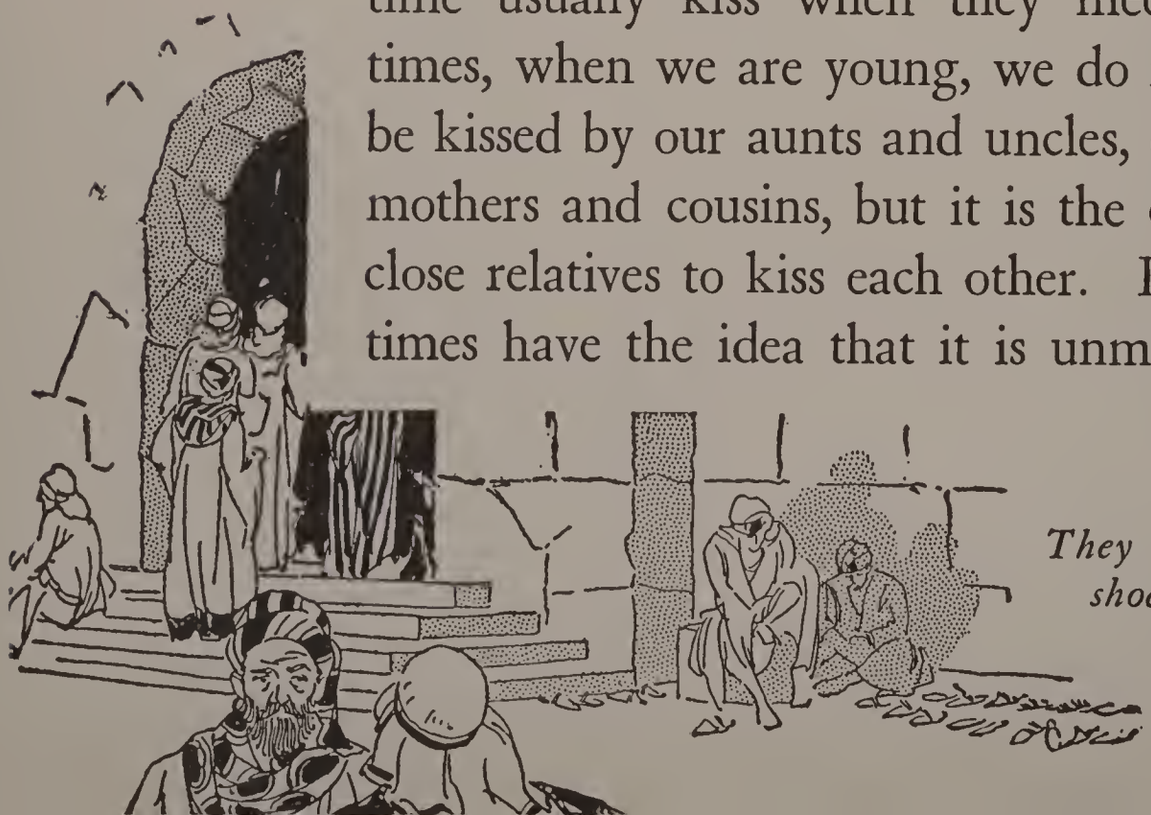
modern enough to wear the kind of shoes that we wear follow the old custom.

We think it very rude to turn our backs on anyone. Most of us would be hurt or insulted if a friend turned his back on us when we started to speak to him.

Can rudeness be politeness?

Again, some Orientals have a different custom. They think it polite to turn their backs. By turning their backs they mean to say that the one who is speaking to them is such a godlike person that they cannot bear to look him in the face. It would dazzle them.

Kissing is another custom of politeness that is not the same in all parts of the world. In this country men do not kiss each other. They shake hands. Women who are good friends and have not seen each other for some time usually kiss when they meet. Sometimes, when we are young, we do not like to be kissed by our aunts and uncles, our grandmothers and cousins, but it is the custom for close relatives to kiss each other. Boys sometimes have the idea that it is unmanly to be



They leave their shoes outside

kissed, because they do not see their fathers being kissed by other people.

Do people kiss in all countries?

In France even grown men kiss each other, not once, but twice. They kiss on each cheek. During the war when our American soldiers were decorated for bravery they were kissed by the French officer who was giving them the decoration.

In China and Japan kissing is regarded with disgust. In other places in the world it is unknown. Instead of kissing, people rub noses, they bite, or they smell one another. These customs seem just as funny to us as kissing would seem to them.

In India the Hindus clean their teeth every day with a fresh twig. They think it terrible that Europeans and Americans use a brush made of animal hair for that purpose, and that they use the brush more than once. Almost any Hindu would rather not have his teeth clean than use one of our dainty tooth brushes. Most of us, if we were given a twig to use, would look at it and say, "What's the

use? You can't clean teeth with that. Might as well not use anything."

Having seen how different the customs of politeness are in different parts of the world, let us think about some of our own rules of etiquette. Most of them are habits with us, so that we don't think of them as customs.

Do politeness habits change?

Gentlemen remove or touch their hats when they meet in the street a lady they know. Ladies nod to the gentlemen or speak to them. Men remove their hats when they enter a house or a church. It used to be a custom for them to remove their hats if they were in an elevator or a train with a lady, but this custom is changing. If a man and a woman are going through the same door, the man lets the woman go first.

There are many customs about eating that we all use. We sit at a table with our arms close to our sides so as not to bump the person next to us. Each one has his own plate and his own eating implements and his own glass of water. This is different from the earlier days when everyone dipped his hand or spoon into

one big dish. We eat quietly so that there is no noise of chewing or drinking. We eat certain foods with certain implements. Things we cannot eat with a fork we eat with a spoon. We never put a knife into our mouths. We do not butter a whole slice of bread; we break it in half first. It used to be a rule that salad was eaten only with a fork. Since many times it is hard to cut with a fork, you may now use a knife to cut your salad, if necessary. We use a napkin to wipe our mouths and hands if they need it. When we have finished eating we ask to be excused if we cannot wait until everyone has finished.

Do eating customs change?

There are so many customs of etiquette about inviting people to visit that we could not begin to name them all here. One of the most important is the custom of thanking those who have invited you.

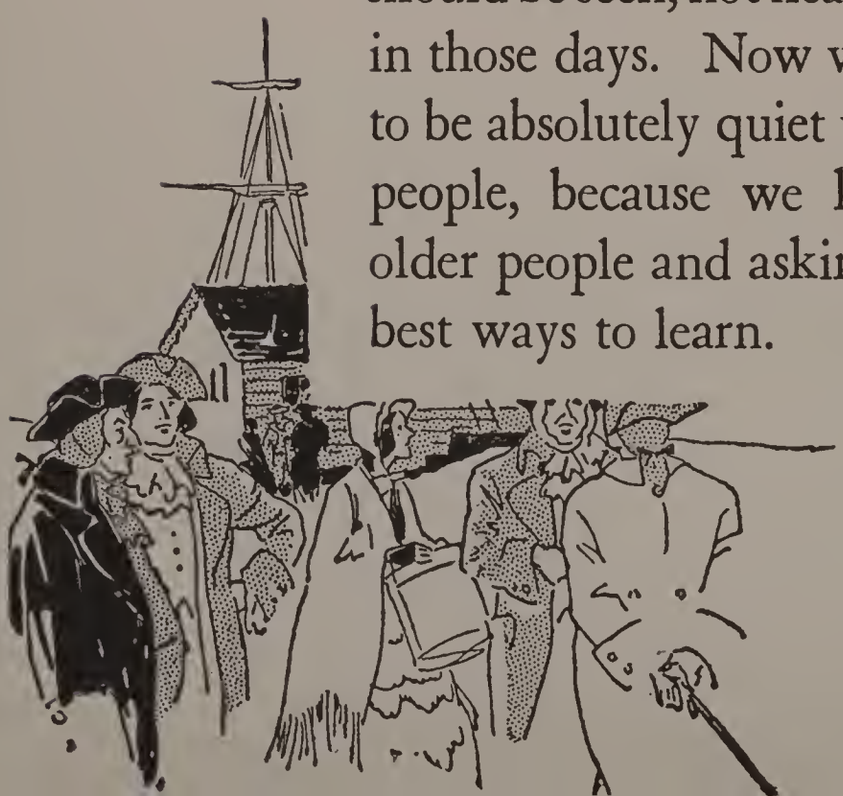
We have special customs of etiquette for special times. Funerals, weddings, church services, all have sets of customs which we follow. There are special and troublesome

Are there rules for meeting people?

rules for meeting kings and princes. Most of us will never meet kings and princes, but we might all some day meet the president of the United States. Etiquette in the White House is kept very simple, yet there are special customs there, too. In speaking to the president we would not speak to him as "Mr. Hoover," but would say, "Mr. President."

The customs of politeness and etiquette are like all other customs. They do not always stay the same. In fact, they are always changing. Politeness and etiquette are closely connected with the custom of fashion and are likely to change with the fashions of dress.

There was a time in this country when it was impolite for children to speak to grown-ups unless the grown-ups spoke first. "Children should be seen, not heard," was what people said in those days. Now we do not expect children to be absolutely quiet when they are with older people, because we know that talking with older people and asking questions is one of the best ways to learn.



Etiquette often changes with fashion's orders

You have probably noticed that when a man and a woman are walking along the street, the man generally takes the outside of the sidewalk. This is another custom that is changing, because there is now no need for the man to walk on the outside. In earlier days before most of our streets were paved the roads got very muddy when it rained or snowed. Since the sidewalks were very close to the street, people on the sidewalks were apt to get splashed with dirty water and mud whenever a carriage or wagon passed them.

Why do men walk nearest the street?

It was polite for men to walk nearest the road so that the women and girls would not get their dresses and coats splashed. In a few more years men will have forgotten that it used to be polite to take the outside of the sidewalk, and women will not expect them to do so.

In early times, in the Middle Ages, and in some places even now, it is considered all right to eat rapidly and to make a great deal of noise while eating. At first, people ate quickly because they were hungry and because they

were afraid someone else would get more food than they did. Later, it was regarded as bad manners if people showed that they were enjoying their food.

During the Middle Ages people had grown a long way past the savage state, but they still had customs of etiquette that we think barbaric. As they ate meat they would throw the bones over their shoulders upon the floor. Instead of using napkins to wipe their hands they used the table cloth, if there was one, or their own clothes, if there was not. Our ideas of cleanliness have changed so much that we think such customs worse than impolite.

What custom is changing now?

A few years ago a gentleman would always ask a lady, "May I smoke?" before he lit a cigarette or cigar. Now that a great many women smoke, men usually do not think of asking that question. It has become a custom for women to smoke, too. Only time will tell whether it will get to be a bad custom, or become a right.

Custom in this matter has changed and is

changing because of the changing customs of living. Women are free to do a great many things now that they could not do ten years ago. Men are freer, too, and so are children. Our customs of living, our fashions and etiquette have changed rapidly in the last few hundred years. That is not true everywhere. The people of the Orient have their own kinds of good manners which they have been using thousands of years and which have not changed much in all that time.

Are all customs changing?

But the more that people with different customs meet, the more customs change.

Chapter VI

THE CUSTOM OF PLAY

Why do we play?

WHEREVER there is work, there must be play. One goes with the other, just as night follows day and spring follows winter. Everybody has heard the old saying: *All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.* If men and women spent all their time working, or if children spent all their time studying, when not eating or sleeping, they would soon become dull and tired. But by spending part of their time in play, their minds and bodies are kept fresh, and they can do much better work when they actually are working than they could do otherwise.

Long ago there probably was no difference between work and play. But now since most people do just a part of the whole job and do the same little things and work mostly with

machines, they like to do some other things which are refreshing and a change—things which they don't have to do.

Even animals like to play, especially when they are young. You have seen a pair of puppies tumbling over each other, or a kitten chasing a ball of yarn around a room.

Today there are all kinds of play, suited to men, women, and children, of every age.

How did play start?

In the beginning the custom of play, like other customs, was very simple. People wanted to play because they did not like to be alone. They loved companionship just as we do. After the work of the day was over, they danced and sang together, and perhaps the boys and girls ran foot-races or played games such as "tag" or "hide and seek."

The little girls would have dolls to play with, and the young boys would play at hunting with toy bows and arrows. For children everywhere and in all times have liked to play at doing the things that they will do when they are grown up. Every girl in the tribe expected

some day to have real babies of her own to care for, and the boys all looked forward to the time when they would be great hunters.

The people who lived in tribes, far back in the world's history, had quite a number of games they liked to play. One of the earliest games was throwing and catching balls. The great thing about games like this is that the players have to use their heads. They must keep their eyes and ears open and watch sharply every move of the other player or players.

What are teams?

Out of this early game of ball there have grown all kinds of different games using balls, such as handball, baseball, football, basketball, and tennis, out of which boys and girls today get so much fun. Schools and colleges everywhere have their teams, made up of pupils in the school or college, which play these games with teams from other schools and colleges.

When a boy becomes a member of one of the ball teams of his school, he learns things that will be of great help to him in later life. He must be unselfish; he must work with the

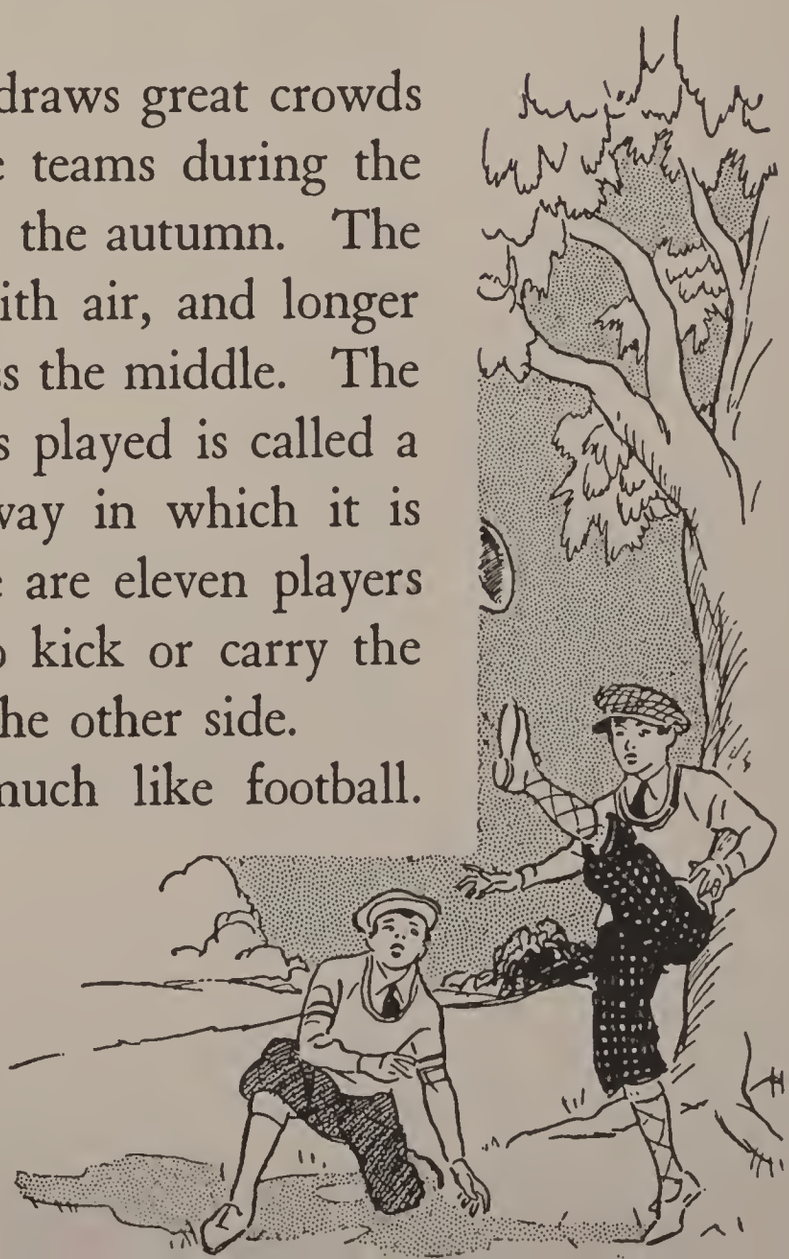
other boys, so that the team will win. He must obey the rules of fair play; he must not do anything that is dishonest. So he learns how to work with other people in order to accomplish something worth while.

What is the most popular game?

Baseball is the most popular outdoor game in America. It is played with a bat and a ball on a field shaped like a diamond, with four bases, between which the players run. There are nine players on each side, one side being "at the bat" while the other side is "in the field."

Football is a game that draws great crowds to see it played by college teams during the football season, which is in the autumn. The ball is of pigskin, filled with air, and longer from end to end than across the middle. The field on which the game is played is called a gridiron, because of the way in which it is marked with lines. There are eleven players on each side. They try to kick or carry the ball over the goal line of the other side.

Basketball is a game much like football.



The players have to use their heads

But it is an indoor game, and so can be played in winter, when the weather is too cold for outdoor games. It is a game that girls, too, can play. The ball is a large, round one. There are five players on each team, and they try to throw the ball as many times as possible into a large, basket-like net hanging over the other team's goal line. It is great fun, both playing the game and watching others play it.

Tennis is an outdoor ball game that many people like to play. You have all seen games of tennis and know how the players strike the ball by means of a wide bat of wickerwork, called a racquet, over a low net stretched across the tennis court. Tennis requires quick movement with arms and legs and a keen eye. It is a fine form of exercise.

Where is cricket played?

Another kind of ball game is known as cricket. In America few people play cricket, but in England and in the British Dominions it is the national outdoor game, just as baseball is in America. Two teams, each with eleven men, play the game. Balls are bowled,

by means of bats in the players' hands, between wickets, which are a sort of low fence. About the game of cricket there has grown up a fine spirit of sportsmanship, so that the word *cricket* has come to mean the very highest type of fair play.

Where did golf start?

Still another kind of ball game which people everywhere, especially the older folk, like to play is golf. It is fine, health-building exercise for persons who cannot play the more exciting games that youngsters enjoy. It was Scotland that gave golf to the world. Even before the discovery of America, golf was the most popular of all games in Scotland. When King James came from Scotland to rule over England, he brought golf with him. Golf is a game that is played out in the open country, over a long stretch of ground called a golf course. Around every large city there are many golf courses where people go to play golf and build up their tired bodies and refresh their minds.

The game of golf is played with a little, hard ball, which is driven over the ground by means

of long clubs of different kinds. The purpose of the game is to hit the ball so that it will fall into a hole a long distance away. There are eighteen of these holes on the course, and the player tries to drive the ball into them with the fewest number of strokes. Recently, a kind of "baby" golf, played indoors, or on small outdoor courses has become very popular.

How is hockey played?

Something like golf, but more exciting, is the game of hockey, which is often played on an ice rink. There are two teams of six men; the players use long, curved sticks, and they try to drive the ball (or puck) into the other side's goal.

It is wonderful how many different kinds of games can be played with a ball. In Spanish-speaking countries the people love to play a game called *jai alai* (pronounced *high a-lie*), or *pelota.* It is played usually by four players on each side. There is a hard-surfaced court with two walls, between which the ball is kept bounding back and forth. The player has a sort of wickerwork basket attached to his

hand, in which the ball must be caught. The game requires good footwork and a skilled eye.

Is dancing a kind of play?

Another form of play that was enjoyed by the earliest tribes, and that still is a regular custom of people in every part of the world today, is dancing. Wherever we go, among the lowest savages or among the most highly civilized races, we find different kinds of dances. There are few customs so widespread as dancing.

The people of early times used to dance for many reasons. Sometimes it was just a sort of merry-making and rejoicing among the people. At other times, they danced as a part of their worship of the gods. Other dances were to prepare the warriors of the tribe for battle, or to celebrate a victory afterwards. Dancing also was a part of the ceremonies when a boy reached manhood and was about to be admitted to membership in the tribe, and of course there were dances in connection with wedding festivities.

The Indians in America were fond of danc-

ing. For their war dances, the men painted their bodies with red paint and covered their heads with large headdresses of eagle feathers. Among the Hopi Indians of the Southwest, the people danced when they wanted their gods to send them rain. Among the "black-fellows" of Australia, dancing is a very important custom. They call their dances *corroborees*. They paint their bodies with white paint, and dance around a fire, with all sorts of strange motions.

Why did Indians dance?

Among the ancient Egyptians and the Hebrews, dancing also played an important part. In ancient Greece, dancing became a beautiful art. There was dancing when a child was born, there was dancing at weddings, and even at funerals when people died. Dances were held everywhere, in the woods and fields, and even in the holy temples. Young men were taught to dance as a means of making their bodies strong and their muscles elastic. The Greeks danced in honor of their gods, they danced at harvest time, and when gather-

ing the grapes in their vineyards. Dances came to have a religious meaning.

The Romans, another famous people of long ago, also had many interesting dances. It was among the Romans that dancing became a regular part of acting in the theaters, just as it is today.

Why do the Chinese dance?

Every spring, in certain parts of China, the men and boys dressed themselves up in special costumes, with animal masks over their faces, and danced to drive away the evil spirits, that they might not hurt the crops.

In India, also, they have interesting dances. There is a special class of young women called *nautch* girls, who dance in the temples in order to bring good luck; they also dance at weddings, feasts, and public entertainments. In Japan they have groups of trained dancers that are known as *geisha* girls.

In Arabia and other near-by countries there is a class of religious men called *dervishes,* who dance one of the strangest dances in the world. They whirl round and round like a top, with

great swiftness, and sometimes keep on whirling until they drop in a faint.

Among the Negroes in Africa there is a dance called the *gorilla dance*. Just before the men go out to hunt the fierce gorilla they perform a dance in which they go through all the motions of hunting the gorilla, and it ends with a great chorus which is supposed to show the men marching back home after the successful ending of the hunt. In the same way, American Indian tribes used to have bear and buffalo dances before they went out to hunt those animals, and in Australia the native tribes have a kangaroo dance.

What was the May-dance?

During the times called the Middle Ages, all through Europe, the people loved to dance. Among the country people in England there was a very pretty dance in the spring, when the crops were being planted. A large pole was set up on the village green, with brightly colored ribbons streaming from it. This was known as the May-pole, and young and old alike danced merrily around it.

The Indians had bear and buffalo dances before going out to hunt

Every country in Europe had its own dances. But it was in France, about 300 years ago, that social dancing, which is the custom today, grew up into a fine art. One of the most beautiful of these dances was the *minuet*. It was a stately and graceful dance, and our own great-grandparents in Colonial America were fond of dancing it. Another beautiful dance, which came a little later, was the *waltz*. People everywhere enjoyed dancing waltzes, and people dance them even today. Another dance that became very popular was the *polka*. Of course, in our own day there are all kinds of new dance steps.

Are dances popular now?

During the last hundred years, in England, the United States, and other countries, special buildings called dance halls have been built for holding dances, in which many persons take part. At all dances some kind of music is played so that the people dancing can easily keep in step. Dancing is still one of the world's leading customs of play.

Music itself began as a form of play. There

is hardly any tribe so lowly that it does not have some way of making music. Even before any musical instruments were invented, people liked to sing. It was natural for man to want to make music, because Nature is full of music. There is the song of birds, the music of the sighing breezes, the music of the waves, and the music of the rustling leaves on the trees.

How did music begin?

By means of song and other music, people showed their joy and their sorrow, their love of sweethearts and family, and their worship of the heavenly powers.

Among the first musical instruments were those made of strings fastened tightly over pieces of wood, and drums made by stretching skins over earthenware vessels or hollow pieces of tree trunk. By beating on the drum, the people of the tribe aroused the spirits of the men going off to the hunt or to war. Soon these early people learned to make flutes and other wind instruments out of hollow reeds.

What were the first instruments?

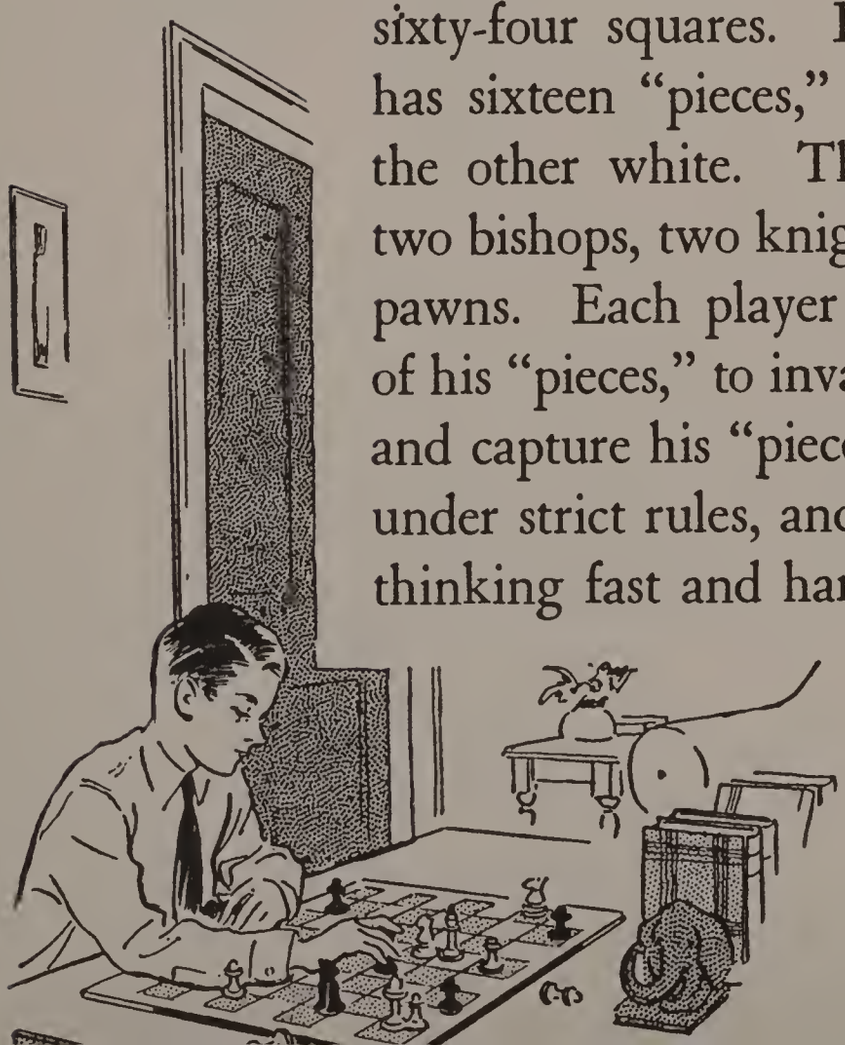
Out of the string stretched across a piece of wood there finally grew the beautiful violin

and the lovely harp. The piano is the child of the harp, the strings being struck by means of pressing keys instead of being plucked with the hand. And out of the rough flutes there has grown the majestic organ, which we hear being played in our churches.

From early times there have been quiet games played indoors, often to while away the hours during the long winter evenings. Such are chess, checkers, dominoes, and card games. Let us look at some of these.

What is chess?

Chess is considered by many people the king of games. It is one that requires a great deal of skill. It is played on a board divided into sixty-four squares. Each of the two players has sixteen "pieces," one set being black and the other white. There is a king, a queen, two bishops, two knights, two rooks, and eight pawns. Each player tries, by skillful playing of his "pieces," to invade the other player's side and capture his "pieces." The game is played under strict rules, and each player has to keep thinking fast and hard in order not to let the



Chess requires a great deal of skill

other player catch him napping. Chess is one of the oldest games in the world. It is thought that it was played first in China and reached Europe by way of India.

How is checkers played?

Checkers is a game something like chess, as it is played on a board with the same number of squares. It also takes skill to play well. The "pieces" are called *men*. There are twelve on each side, one side being black and the other white or red. Each player moves toward the last row, known as the *king row,* of the other side, capturing on the way as many of the other player's men as possible, by "jumping" them. When a "man" reaches the king row, another "man" is placed over him, and he becomes a "king" and can move in any direction, seeking to capture the other player's "men" or "kings."

Checkers, too, is a very good game for making a person keep his wits sharp. Like chess, it is an ancient game, for we know that it was played by the old Greeks. It is sometimes called *draughts*.

What are dominoes?

A different sort of game, also played by two persons, is dominoes. The "pieces" used in this game are small, flat, and oblong-shaped, made of ivory, bone, or wood. The full number of pieces in a set is twenty-eight, each piece being marked with two sets of black or white spots, ranging in number from zero to twelve in different combinations. One player lays down a domino, and then the other player must match it with a domino having the same number of spots on one side as there are on one side of the first domino. The first player must then match dominoes. When a player cannot match, he loses his turn.

Where were playing cards invented?

We come next to playing cards, with which all sorts of interesting games are played. Playing cards, we think, were invented in China. At any rate, they appeared in Europe during the Middle Ages, at least six hundred years ago.

In different kinds of card games various numbers of people can play at the same time. Playing a card game well depends partly on the lucky cards that one receives when the cards

are given out, and partly on the skill with which a person plays the cards he gets. That is what makes card games so interesting.

Have cards changed?

At first, there were usually eighty-six cards in a pack, besides the extra card called the "joker." These packs had four sets, or "suits": hearts, bells, leaves, and acorns. Later, the suits became swords, batons, cups, and money. It was about 400 years ago, in France, that the suits which we have today were invented: namely, hearts, clubs, spades, and diamonds. In the card pack used today there are fifty-two cards, not counting the "joker." This makes thirteen cards of each suit. Hearts and diamonds are red; spades and clubs are black. Each suit of cards is numbered from one to ten, and then there are three picture cards: the king, the queen, and the jack. Number one of each suit is the *ace,* and is the highest of all the numbered cards. That is why we say that a person who stands at the top of the list is an ace.

Last of all, we must not forget the theater.

It is one of the most important of our forms of amusement. We still call the shows that we see in the theater *plays*.

Is the theater a new amusement?

Theaters, too, have a long history. The ancient Greeks, more than two thousand years ago, used to build great outdoor theaters, set in steep hillsides, with seats for thousands of people. In these theaters wonderful plays were performed. The Romans, too, had their great outdoor theaters, which would hold huge crowds. The Chinese, on the other side of the world, have had theaters for hundreds of years.

In the theater the actors, by their talking and acting, tell us stories of things that have happened or that might have happened in the real world. When the stories are sad, they are called *tragedies*; when they are gay, they are called *comedies*. "Play-going" has always been one of man's favorite pastimes. Often there is dancing and music along with the play. Everybody likes to see plays, because they show us the joys and sorrows of people like ourselves. Good plays refresh our minds when

we are tired, and they make us forget the troubles we meet in everyday life.

What is an opera?

A special kind of play, in which the words are all sung to the music of an orchestra, is called *grand opera*. That is a very lovely thing. Those who take part in it are wonderful singers, and people are willing to pay high prices to be present at a performance.

Of course, there are many other forms of the custom of play which we have not had time to mention. But we can see that play is an important part of our lives today, and that it does much to make the world brighter and more enjoyable for us.

Chapter VII

SOME BAD CUSTOMS

CUSTOMS we have talked about so far have been more good than bad. They might have seemed like bad customs to the people who did not use them, but they seemed to be good customs to the people who did use them.

Are all customs good?

There are some customs that were really bad. Most of them are no longer used. As soon as people began to think about them and to see that they were not good customs, they were slowly dropped from use. Some bad customs, however, have lasted for hundreds of years. We cannot guess how long it will be before these bad customs will come to a place where people will know they are bad. It may be a long, long time. The bad customs, as well as the good ones, have been used so much and

so long that they have become a habit. We do not think much about the things we do just from habit.

What bad customs are there?

Let us see what some of the bad customs are.

First of all there are the customs that have made people waste property. To waste property is to destroy it when it is not necessary. One of the religious customs we read about is the frequent one of burying property with dead people. This was a bad custom. Suppose a savage had spent a long time making a bow and arrows, a spear and an ax. When he died the tools would be buried with him. His sons, brothers, or friends would have to spend hours, even days and weeks, making tools just like the ones that had been destroyed or buried. A good bow, some arrows, a spear and an ax were simply wasted. To early men these were really too valuable to lose. It was a bad custom that made them destroy the things they needed. The dead man, of course, did not need the bow and arrows, the spear, or the ax, but the people at that time

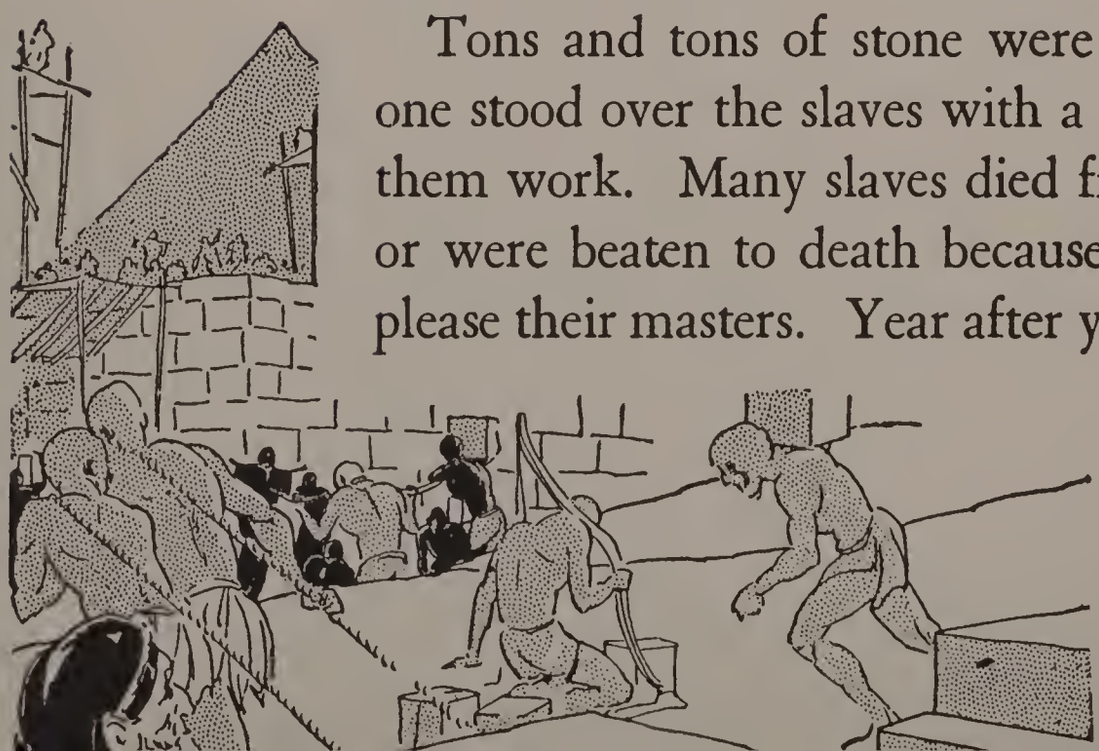
thought he needed them and they would not bury him without them.

What were the pyramids?

You have heard of the great pyramids in Egypt. Did you ever think that they were built because of a bad custom? The pyramids are really large tombs. They are the graves built for Egyptian kings who lived thousands of years ago. One of the kings having built himself a wonderful tomb, other kings tried to build bigger and more beautiful tombs for themselves, trying to outdo one another.

It took thousands of slaves many years to build one pyramid. Even with all the things that engineers know about buildings now and with all the modern tools we have it would be a hard job to build a pyramid like the ones in Egypt. Think how hard it must have been for the men who built them.

Tons and tons of stone were used. Someone stood over the slaves with a whip to make them work. Many slaves died from overwork or were beaten to death because they did not please their masters. Year after year they toiled



All the time and effort was wasted

away, putting the heavy stones into place, building passageways and deep vaults—and all this work for a tomb. All this time and effort wasted so that a king, when he died, could be buried in a place that was grander than the grave of some other king.

Much that was worth while could have been done if those men had put the same amount of work and the same number of years into something else. Think how many houses could have been built, or how many boats, or how much food could have been raised, had these men been doing other work.

What is a taboo?

Another bad custom is one that keeps people from eating foods that are plentiful and good. Such foods are usually not eaten because they are "taboo." Taboo is a word used for a tribe's feelings about certain things which kept people from touching or using them. Taboo means "hands off." Tribal folk usually had a great many taboos, but many of them were harmless. The taboos that were really bad were the taboos on food. Even if people were starving,

they would not touch the food that was taboo.

What are food taboos?

Foods usually became taboo because they were thought to be holy or sacred. Even now there are many food taboos in the world. The Hindus will not eat beef, because the cow is a sacred animal. To a Hindu, eating beef would be like eating one of the gods.

Every year in India many people die because of disease who might get well or who might not have been sick if they could have eaten proper food and taken medicine.

There are also taboos on dangerous animals. This is a bad custom. In India and Egypt there are taboos on crocodiles and cobras. People do not dare kill them because they are sacred. They think it better to let these animals kill someone now and then than to anger the gods by killing sacred animals.

Another bad custom is the system of castes. Castes are a kind of steps or classes of society. They go from very low classes to very high. A person is born into the class to which his parents belong and must stay in that class all

his life. The person in the caste or step just above him will have nothing to do with him. They do not speak to him and may even pull their clothing aside so as not to touch him when they pass in the street. No one can marry a person who is not in his caste. Nothing can be done to change caste.

What is caste?

Under a system like that, a man who wants to be better than he is might as well give up at the very beginning. To us it doesn't seem fair that people should be born without any chance of climbing higher. This system has been a custom for thousands of years in India and in some other parts of the world and it has changed scarcely any in all that time.

You know that the Civil War was fought in this country to abolish slavery. When the war was won by the northern states and the slaves were set free, another bad custom was ended. There are now only a few places in the world where people still own slaves.

We believe that slavery is a bad custom because we think it wrong for any man to own

another man as if he were an animal or a piece of furniture to be bought or sold at will.

Was slavery a custom?

It was because the northern people and the southern people could not agree on the custom of slavery that the Civil War had to be fought. When the northern states won the war the slaves were set free, and there have not been any slaves in this country since then.

It took the southern part of the country many years to find out how to raise cotton, sugar, and corn without slaves to do the work. There are probably a few people in the South now who still think that slavery was not necessarily a bad custom.

The Civil War is one thing that shows us how important customs are. When people in the same group or country cannot agree about them and have to go to war to decide whether a custom is good or bad, whether they will use it or not, then we can be sure that custom is a very important part of their lives.

When we hear of the cruel and bloodthirsty sports that have amused people in the past and

which still amuse them in some countries, we realize that here is another bad custom.

Can sports be cruel?

The Romans had some cruel sports. There was the custom of gladiators fighting in an arena, with great crowds of people in the seats of the grandstands to watch them. Sometimes the men fought each other. Many times they fought wild animals.

In the early Middle Ages sports were often very cruel. It was the custom to torment the weak and to watch the helpless struggle. Birds were shot and animals were killed in a way to make them suffer most.

A sport enjoyed on holidays was to get together a number of blind people and shut them up in an enclosed place in the town. A pig was put in with them for a prize. The blind people were to beat the pig with sticks. The more the poor blind ones hit each other, the funnier the crowd thought it.

Surely this was a cruel and bad custom. We do not hear of such things now. We are all taught to help and take care of those who are

not able to take care of themselves. It has become a custom to be kind to those who are weaker than we are.

What is bullfighting?

In Spain and other Spanish countries the national amusement is bullfighting. This sport means that a bull and a man fight in an arena. The bull is angered so that he rushes at and tries to gore the fighter with his horns. The fighter, who must be very quick, tries to escape from the bull until he can injure or kill him. Many times the bullfighter is killed instead of the bull.

To an American this seems a very cruel sport and a bad custom. To a Spaniard it is a fine kind of amusement. The Spaniard will point out that the bullfighter does not often get killed, and that the sport is not nearly as cruel as it used to be. Perhaps this means that people's ideas are changing slowly and that some day there will be no more bullfighting even in Spain.

Chapter VIII

OUR OWN CUSTOMS ARE IMPORTANT

WHEN you were three years old you could probably count to four or five, and you thought yourself rather clever. By the time you were in second or third grade you could probably count to one hundred. By then you knew that there were many numbers after one hundred. Now you know much more about numbers, and you have learned that there is no end to them.

How old are customs?

Today, even the oldest and wisest men in the world—the ones who have studied all their lives—cannot tell the age of the earth. They have to guess at it. They cannot tell the number of years that people have been living on the earth. They have to guess at that, too.

Just like them, we do not know how old customs are. We can only guess that customs are

as old as man. The first men on earth probably began to make customs. Ever since then men have been making new customs or changing the old ones.

People do not go on using customs year after year and century after century unless there is some good reason. Why did men make customs and why did they follow them so closely?

Why do customs last?

There is something in every one of us that makes us want to be like the other people we know. Of course we don't want to be exactly like everybody else, for we all like to feel that there is something a little special about our own self. But we don't want to be enough different from the others so that they will think us strange or funny.

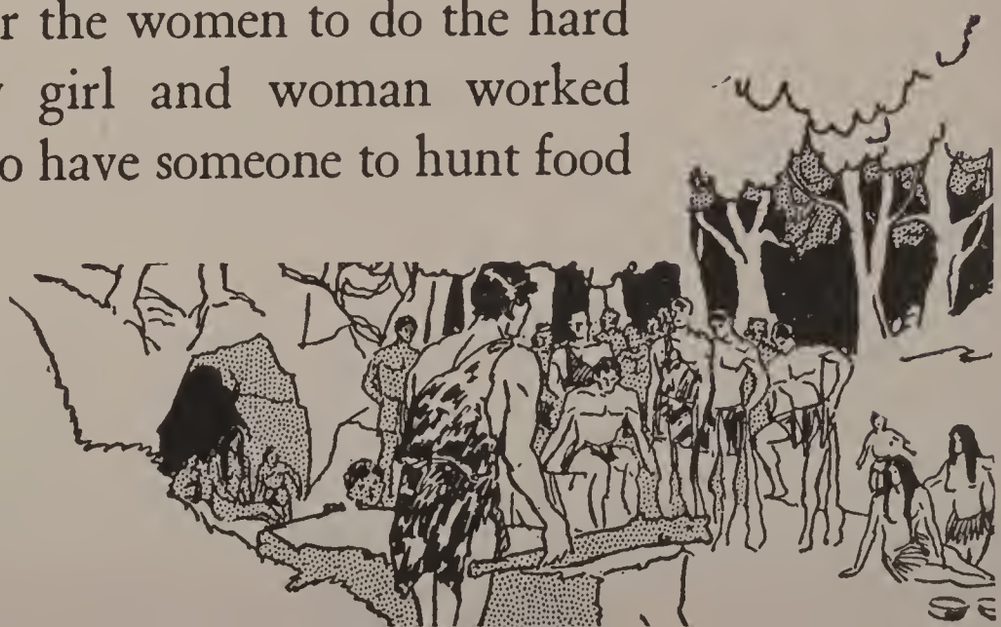
The reason for this is that none of us would be happy living alone. Everyone enjoys being liked by other people. He likes to be one of the crowd, or one of the gang. You may have heard someone say, "Man is a social creature." This means that men and women, boys and girls, must live with other people to be happy.

They must have someone to talk to, to work with, and to care for. We might actually die of lonesomeness if we had to live quite alone for a long time.

Why do people stay together?

Early men were like that, too. They wanted to belong to the crowd because it was pleasanter to live with others. It was also easier, for two or three men could do things in hunting or building that one man could not do alone. It was safer, too, to live in groups, families and tribes, than to live alone.

It was very important to early man that he should be a member of the tribe and not be turned out to live by himself. For that reason he was willing and eager to follow the customs his tribe had made. If the tribe said that a young man might marry only girls from a certain other tribe, he would be careful to pick his wife in the usual way. He was risking his life if he did not follow the custom. If it was the custom for the women to do the hard work, then every girl and woman worked hard. They had to have someone to hunt food



They wanted to belong to the crowd

for them, and someone who could protect them from dangerous animals. No woman could take the risk of refusing to work, because it would mean that she would be killed or turned out of her husband's cave and banished from the tribe.

Why did people follow the customs?

If it was the custom to have painful tattooing on the arms and faces of the men, every boy would want to be tattooed as soon as he was old enough. The pain might be dreadful, but the boy could not let the other boys and men think he was a coward. Besides, he wanted to look as much like the other men of his tribe as he could, so that he would feel like one of them.

If any trouble came to a tribe, the members were apt to blame it on any person in the tribe who had not been doing things just like all the rest. Storms, they thought, were caused by the anger of the gods at someone who had not prayed, or who had not made food offerings, or who had killed a taboo animal. In order to stop the storm the person who had broken the custom was punished, sometimes by death.

It was really very dangerous for a savage not to follow the customs of his people.

The early people, having made their customs, were bound to follow them. No one dared to be different.

Do customs make life harder?

It seems to us that such people were tied hand and foot with customs. Yet we have just as many customs today. Instead of making life harder for us they usually make it easier.

How do we learn our customs? There seem to be almost too many to learn.

The truth is that we start learning them when babies and never stop learning as long as we live.

The first things we learn, we learn from our parents and from other members of our family. For some time a baby's whole world is made up of his own home and the people in it. It is not until we go to school that we begin to learn much from outside people. Until that time our fathers, mothers, and older brothers and sisters have taught us almost everything we know.

How are most things learned at first?

All babies and children learn a great deal more by watching and listening to their parents than they ever learn by someone's saying, "This is the way to do this." Children imitate everything they see or hear. They learn how to talk, how to play, how to eat, how to wash and dress, by seeing how other persons do those things. They learn selfishness or unselfishness that way. That is the way they learn what to like and what not to like. Most of the time when we find young children who say, "I don't like spinach" or "I don't like carrots," it is because they have heard someone else say it or have seen some older brother or sister refuse to eat spinach or carrots. If ever since a child can remember, everybody in his family has eaten spinach, the child will not even think whether or not he should like it. He will eat it like everyone else. He has learned to do what other people do.

Most boys want to grow up to be a man like father. Nearly every girl thinks it would be fine to be just like mother. It is right for them to feel that way. Their parents have fed them,

Most boys want to grow up to be the same sort of men as their fathers

clothed them, and made them comfortable. They have loved them, too, and helped them to learn. It is right for children to look up to their parents as people to imitate.

What do we learn from others?

At first we do exactly as the members of our family do. We are learning customs from them. Later we go to school. Then we start learning from a great many people. We learn from our teachers, of course, but we also learn from everyone who is going to school with us. Until now we have just been a member of a family. Now we are a member of a class and of a school.

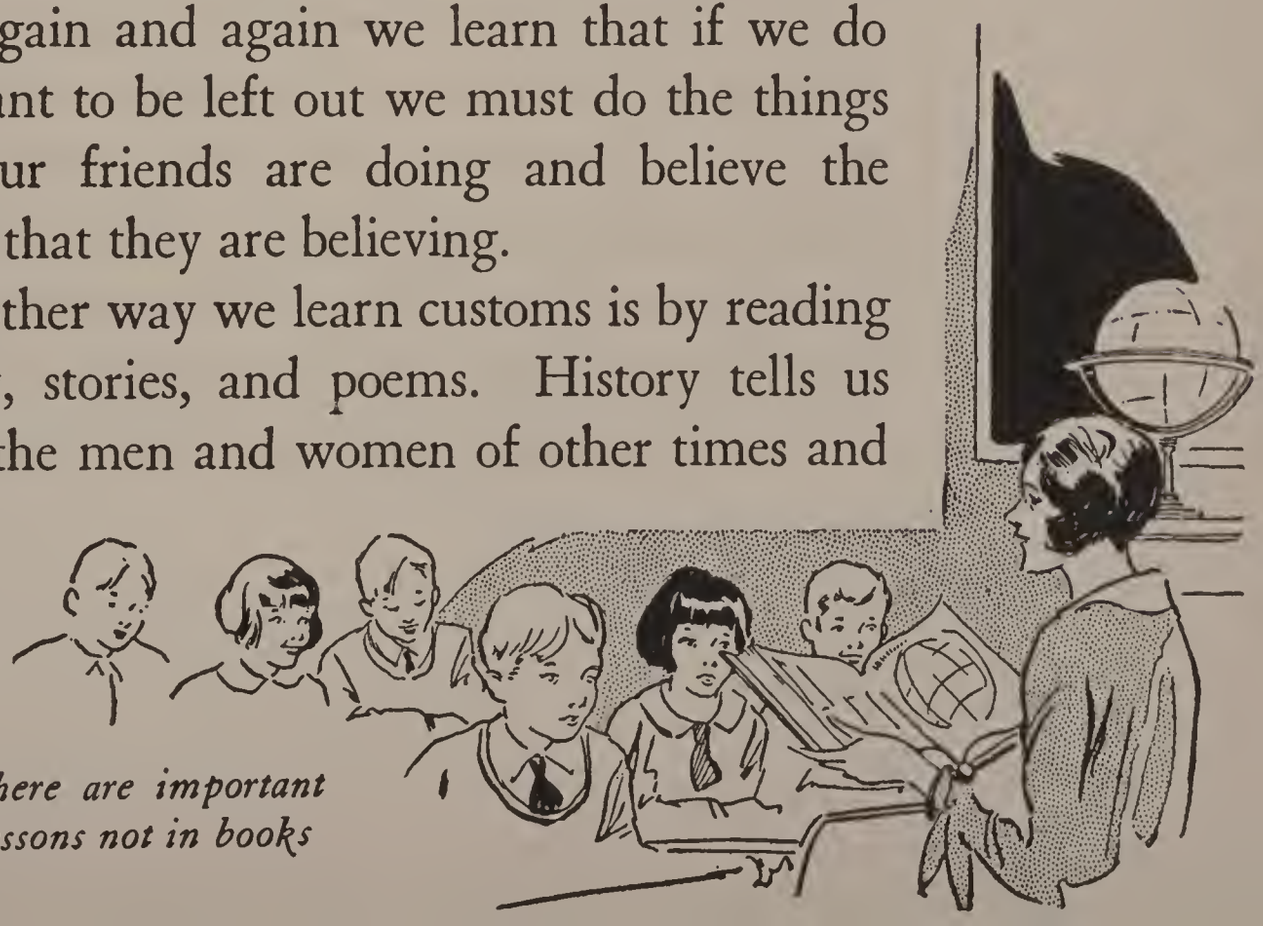
Even two children who are five years old and just starting to kindergarten can learn things from each other. First, each one learns that here is someone who does not have to give him food or toys, and who does not have to love him. If he wants the other child to like him and play with him, he will have to share his toys and otherwise treat him kindly. Each child will find that if he is not friendly to the other children in the kindergarten class, he

will be left alone. No one will play games with him. No one will want to sit beside him in class. The other children may call him names. He will not be happy. In other words, he has not yet learned to live with other people and to do the things that other people expect him to do. This is an important lesson that is not in books, but that most of us learn while we are very young. Those who do not learn it usually spend unhappy lives, because they have to live very much alone.

What happens when our customs are not followed?

As we grow older we learn more and more from persons our own age. We learn customs in games and sports, in dress, and in conduct. We learn what kind of person to admire. We learn what to believe and what not to believe. And again and again we learn that if we do not want to be left out we must do the things that our friends are doing and believe the things that they are believing.

Another way we learn customs is by reading history, stories, and poems. History tells us about the men and women of other times and



There are important lessons not in books

about their customs. Many of these customs we are still using. Some of the people in history are fine examples for us to follow. Almost every boy who reads about Abraham Lincoln wishes that he might be a man like him. Even the make-believe stories and poems that we read tell us about people who are so fine we would like to imitate them or so bad that we hope never to be like them.

Can we keep from learning customs?

With all these ways of learning customs we could not keep from learning them if we tried. If in some way we could avoid learning customs, we would not be able to live happily with the people we know. We could not understand them. Much of the time we would not know what they were talking about.

In order to live in a world with other people we have to know what the customs of the people are. We never stop learning, because customs are always changing. We are always meeting new people, too, and becoming members of new classes and new groups. Every time we get to know someone outside our own

"crowd" or "set" and he introduces us to the people in his "set," we learn new customs in conduct and ideas. If we want to become a member of this new set we will have to learn its customs and use them.

How do customs make life easy?

It may seem to you that everything is so mixed up with customs that we would all have a hard time ever doing anything right. This is not true, because customs have usually shown the easiest and best way of doing things. Having customs really makes it easier for us to live and understand each other. They keep us from getting tangled up a hundred times a day and getting into all kinds of trouble.

Do you realize that telling time by a clock is a custom? Suppose, with all the other inventions we have to make living easier, no one had invented a clock or an accurate way of telling time.

"Lunch will be ready when the sun is overhead," your mother might say. How many members of your family would get to the luncheon table at the same time?

Would life be safe without customs?

What would our lives be like if we did not have some of our customs and laws? We are sure that we would not have much fun. Would you like to think that because you had angered someone he was free to kill you? Can you think how disagreeable and dangerous it would be to go about if there were no traffic laws? What if automobiles and wagons did not have to be driven on the right side of the street, but could go on either side in either direction? Would your life be very safe?

Do fire departments and police departments make things any safer for you? Suppose there were no parks in the city for children to play in, and no beaches where they might bathe, protected by life-guards. Suppose there were no schools and no one to help us find the things we want to learn. What if each one of us had to find for himself some way of earning food and clothes?

Your family sits down at a table quietly and is served with food. Would you like it if each one of you had to grab what you could get and

gulp it down for fear you wouldn't get enough to eat? Suppose there was no custom saying that the weak and small should not be attacked or tormented. Do you know what you would suffer?

What if work were not honorable and no one worked any more than he had to? Would we have all the things we enjoy now, like wholesome food, good clothes, comfortable homes, and pleasant ways to entertain ourselves?

Customs are not just things that someone says we *must* do. They are not to keep us from doing the things we want to do. They actually help us and we follow them because the people with whom we live have brought us up to believe they are good.

Can we change bad customs?

We do not need to feel helpless when we think of the great number of customs surrounding us. If a custom is good, it is better to follow it. If a custom is bad for us, we all have a chance to help change it. At first the person who tries to change a custom will be looked down upon by other people. They may even

think he is wicked or crazy. But if he is right, and the custom is bad, there will soon be others who will come to think as he does. Slowly the custom will change.

Are there more good than bad customs?

It should make us all feel better, surrounded as we are by customs, to know that since the beginning of the world there have been many more good customs than bad ones. The bad customs sooner or later are changed or stop being customs. The good customs go on and on, always making it easier for us to live and learn and be happy, and to make the most out of life.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 042 954 235 2